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EDITORIAL

I RECEIVED the annual report of the Gramophone Company the other day, and was impressed to learn that the profits of the company had for the year ending last June exceeded all others in their history. I was even more impressed to learn in reply to my letter of congratulation that the business done this autumn was considerably in excess of the corresponding period last year. The quality of music that is being recorded nowadays is responsible for this prosperity ; but I do not hesitate to claim that our paper deserves the credit for helping to gain some of the practical acknowledgment of such music. I asked the Gramophone Company if they would record a symphony voted for by our readers, and the reply was a cordial "Yes," provided that they were not bound to any particular date. On p. xviii you will find a voting form ; fill this up and send it to me at 25, Newman Street, W. 1, before January 31st, writing "Symphony" on the outside of the envelope. To the reader whose list gets nearest to the popular vote I will send a complete set of my novels autographed, or, if he prefers them, twelve 7/6 records chosen by himself. I may add that the amount of interest taken in this competition will have an important bearing on the next steps taken in regard to the formation of the proposed society.

My second announcement this month is that we have made arrangements to produce, in volumes, twelve operas at a time, a literal translation into English of every opera any portion of which has been recorded. The original text will be printed, and in the case of French and German operas, the Italian singing version as well. I hesitate to perpetuate those degradations of sense and sound, the English singing versions ; but I suppose that, where the copyright allows of their being printed, the public will like to have them. There will be a brief history of the circumstances in which each opera was written and produced, together with a note on its last performance in England, and whenever any aria has been recorded an attempt will be made to give an exhaustive list of such records and, wherever possible, to indicate any particularly noteworthy rendering. Work has already started on what we venture to claim is a philanthropic task. The support accorded by the public to the first volume of twelve operas will determine if the work shall go on. We expect to be able to announce the price and format of the series in our March number. I may add, that if we receive generous support, I shall add a volume of all the songs that have been published for the gramophone—both English and foreign with necessary translations. As soon as the work is completed we shall try to keep pace with new songs every month in our paper.

The preparation of the player-piano section has entailed more labour than we expected. We hope to begin it in February.

A happy and harmonious New Year to you all.

Compton Mackenzie

Review of the Last Quarter of 1923

By The Editor

THE preceding quarter was remarkable for the scarcity of very good vocal records. This quarter is remarkable for such a quantity of them that I am bewildered to know which to recommend first. On the whole I shall give the palm to Mr. Hackett's superb record of *O Paradiso* (Col. 7271). Allusion has been made elsewhere to the clarity of his enunciation; to that may be added praise for his perfect Italian accent and style, for his restful flexibility, for his judicious emotion and, last of all, for that delicious effect of security which a really great singer or juggler or jockey knows how to produce. The voice reminds me of Bonci at his best; the recording is exceptionally good, both of the voice and of the accompaniment. But it is a 10in. song on a 12in. record; and though it may be worth 7/6, Columbia, you ought to have made it 5/6. Mr. Hackett is well entitled to wear the purple, but he is not entitled to Sir Benjamin Backbite's "meadow of margin." However wonderful your new surface may be, I don't want to use it for a mirror in which to laminate my face or, to speak less gramophonically, for shaving. I had no sooner cried "Eureka!" to Mr. Hackett than half-a-dozen Brunswick records arrived from the Cliftophone Company, and I found *O Paradiso* again, this time on a 10in. disc at 5/6, with *Le Rêve* from Massenet's *Manon* (Brun. 15040). The singer is Mario Chamlee, and I see that in the last number of THE GRAMOPHONE my friend Mr. Caskett puts him among the two or three best living tenors. He certainly has a magnificent voice, but I did not feel with him quite the security I enjoyed with Mr. Hackett. If I may mention tenors in terms of sopranos, I should say that Hackett was Galli-Curci and that Chamlee was Tetrizzini. There is never the least doubt that Chamlee is singing. Many people will enjoy that consciousness of exertion. I may think that H. G. Wells is a greater writer than Joseph Conrad, and I may not enjoy Miss Sybil Thorndike's acting; but many people admire Mr. Joseph Conrad just because they can see on every page that he really is writing; and many people are profoundly moved by Miss Sybil Thorndike's acting just because she manages to make it appear so extremely difficult to do. I prefer a Duse to a Bernhardt, a Cinquevalli to a Sandow, Hardy to Meredith, Shakespeare to Ben Jonson.

Of the soprano records issued this quarter the one I have enjoyed most was the aria from Gluck's *Alceste* sung by Maria Jeritza (H.M.V. 2-033090). Far better than the song from *Lohengrin*, with which

she made her *début* on English records, does this exquisite aria reveal the qualities that have made her so highly esteemed in America. Her voice is very rich and very warm, and her low notes have an incomparable velvet. A Russian American singer, Rosa Raisa, made her *début* on English records in the *Miserere* from *Il Trovatore*, with Tokatyan, a capital tenor, who from his name should be an Armenian (Voc. A.0198). Raisa is the other end of the soprano world from Jeritza: her voice is as cold and hard as a diamond. Yet, in spite of its coldness, I find it most attractive—much more so than Beralta's or Mabel Garrison's; but it is difficult to judge a voice from one record, and I hope that the Vocalion Company will give us more. One of our correspondents last month expressed his surprise at the high praise we gave Evelyn Scotney. There is a new record (Voc. D.02135) of hers this quarter which seems to me exquisite. By the way, like Destournel, she has been brought from pink seclusion into the publicity of pale blue, so that for 6/6 you can have the *Blue Danube* and the waltz from *Romeo and Juliet*. I wager that most of our readers who try this record will support our high opinion of Miss Scotney's voice. It may be an imitation of Galli-Curci, but it is a good imitation. Galli-Curci herself sings the cavatina from *Linda di Chamounix* (H.M.V. 2-053211), which I think deserves to go into the second class of her records, if only for the fact that she makes enjoyable what I always thought a dull song. Caroline Hatchard sings the shadow song from *Dinorah* (Voc. C.31098) without justifying its repetition by any particular graces. Surely it is rather foolish of English sopranos to sing this sort of thing when there are so many lovely English and German songs unrecorded, and surely it is more than foolish of Hempel to give us *Phyllis has such charming graces* (H.M.V. 2-3773), when she might have given us something of Schubert or Schumann. Not that I dislike *Phyllis*, but Hempel's rendering of it is a failure without any charm or atmosphere. I strongly recommend the record of Bori and Gigli (H.M.V. 7-34006) in a brief duet from Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*, which could not be better. The two records of Miss Olga Haley issued by the Vocalion Company are both first class. I wish she had omitted the *Chanson Indoue*, which is beginning to haunt bulletins. This is neither a song for a mezzo-soprano, nor a baritone, nor a soprano, nor a contralto, nor a bass; it was written neither for the

violin nor for the violoncello. What exasperates me about these repetitions is that when our shelves are groaning under the weight of *Chansons Indoues*, and when therefore we do not come forward as we should do to buy Miss Haley's rendering of it, the conclusion reached by the singer and the recording company is that the public wants more rubbish. Please, Miss Haley, be really original and discover that Schumann, Schubert, Brahms, Hugo Wolf, Strauss, and even Beethoven have written some songs that any mezzo-soprano might be proud to sing, especially one with such a round and rich and pure and true voice as yours, and do not be discouraged if you find that the poor public has already spent more than it can afford on the *Chanson Indoue*. In justice to Miss Haley I ought to add that on the other side of the disc she gives us Tchaikovsky's *Air des Adieux* from *Jeanne d'Arc*. Her 10in. disc contains *The Blackbird's Song* by Cyril Scott and the *Eriskay Love Lilt*, both charmingly sung.

Neither Dinh Gilly (H.M.V. 7-52244) nor Lazzari (Voc. B.3040) justifies new records of the overcoat song from *Bohème*. Lazzari is very much the better, and the anonymous lecturer on the other side of his record presents us with what I think is his most unctuously humorous effort up to date. By far the best bass record this quarter is of Ezio Pinza, and not only the best bass recorded for this quarter, but for many quarters. He sings the lament from *Simon Boccanegra* (H.M.V. 2-052240), one of Verdi's lesser known operas, and I cannot imagine its being better done. Pinza is a young singer who has made an enormous success in Italy, and I should hazard an opinion that he will become the leading European bass until America buys him. This record must not be missed by connoisseurs of *bel canto*. Norman Allin (Col. L.1504) scores a moderate success on one side with the *Song of the Volga Boatmen*, and a rank failure on the other with *When a Maiden takes your fancy* from *Il Seraglio*. Mr. Allin's voice, like the timpani, is apt to sound a little hollow on the gramophone, and I never know whether he is going to be very good or very bad; but whatever his faults he is the first English bass I shall pick for my English opera. Mr. Radford gives us a couple of good songs in English. Rubinstein's *Asra* is the better. Malcolm McEachern rumbles forth *Hear me! Ye Winds and Waves* effectively enough on one side of a record, and on the other that uncommonly stupid song *Hybrias the Cretan* (Voc. D.02108). But I greatly prefer his double-sided 10in. record at 4/6 with *The Calf of Gold* on one side and *The Hundred Pipers* on the other (Voc. R. 6125). *The Hundred Pipers* is simply splendid. Now, Mr. McEachern, don't bother about Cretans, but set your foot upon your native heath and turn over the pages of *Songs from the North*. What about *Maclean of Ardgour* and many another that would suit you and your audience better than

Hybrias the Cretan? A vintage Chaliapin adds one more record to the splendid series from *Boris* (H.M.V. 2-022021) and brings the procession of basses in 1923 to a noble conclusion.

Now for the rest of the tenors. Gigli deserves patting on the back for *Tu sola* (H.M.V. 7-52201), partly because he sings it so charmingly, and partly because he wants a little cheering up. Anseau strikes me as a failure in that tiresome song *Nature Immense* from *La Damnation de Faust* (H.M.V. 2-032072). He is overweighted by the turgid music, and I do not think that the recording is at fault as several of my correspondents have supposed; always provided, of course, that their records have not got chicken pox. When this disease breaks out on one of the H.M.V. records, send it back to the head office. You will never find a just complaint ignored. I have alluded elsewhere to Tudor Davies in *The Flower Song* from *Carmen* (H.M.V. D.739) and to his faulty enunciation. I am afraid he is well on the way to being ruined by Wagner. Don José was about as unlike Siegfried as anybody could be, but Mr. Davies sings the song as if he were a Viking lodged in Grimsby police station for trawling within the three mile limit. Smirnov has given us two perfect records, one of which, the *Chanson Georgienne* of Rachmaninoff (H.M.V. 2-022024), will be familiar to many of my readers in that exquisite record of McCormack, *O cease thy singing, maiden fair* (H.M.V. 5-2377). The melody is entrancing. The other record of Smirnov is the aria from *Prince Igor* (H.M.V. 2-022025), most beautifully sung. By the way, when are we going to have the melodious baritone aria from the same opera? I should like to call my readers' particular attention to two double-sided 3/6 records by Walter Glynne (H.M.V. 1706) and Sydney Coltham (H.M.V. 1707). I wish that tenors like these who know how to enunciate and who never waver from the middle of the note could give us better songs. I recognise that they may be tied down to the publishers of bad ballads, but it is lamentable that two such good singers should find themselves in the position of waitresses handing round fancy cakes in a teashop. Mr. Browning Mummery (Zono. A.278) extracts a furtive tear on one side quite charmingly, but fails on the other to sound an alarm at all impressively. With many English singers it would have been the other way round, and optimism about British opera springs anew when I hear a failure in oratorio. I hope that I have not left out any noteworthy tenor of this quarter; but if I have, my readers and the tenor passed over must forgive me, for I have not had such a heavy list since I started the paper. Yes, I have forgotten Ulysses Lappas. As a fervid Philhellene, I should like to praise this Greek tenor unreservedly; but, although he has great dramatic power, he has not learnt to climb down to his low notes gracefully. I should be inclined to hazard without knowing any-

thing about his career that, like most Greeks, he was too impatient and did not study enough. Can he really sing? I am still waiting to hear him in something that is not dramatic.

Of soprano records not yet mentioned we have Mme. Austral in the lovely melody from Weber's *Der Frieschütz* (H.M.V. D.775), which I do not think appears on any other English disc. Mme. Austral, like Mr. Tudor Davies, is suffering from too much Wagner. I really cannot think of anybody on the operatic stage more unsuitable for this song, nor did I care for her and Mme. Thornton in the great duet from *Aida*. They both sing it without the slightest dramatic sense, and for me the result is just boring. The orchestral accompaniment is excellent. Elena Gerhardt gave us Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* (Voc. L.5036). I take this opportunity of repeating that I find the Tremusa sound-box most successful with Gerhardt's voice. She is a difficult singer for the gramophone, and I don't think that it is quite fair, as some of my correspondents have done, to blame the recording. The Vocalion Company has made recording blunders in the past which have created a certain prejudice against their records, and I want to take this opportunity of calling attention to the really remarkable improvement that has been achieved by steady progress every month. Two sopranos I have still to mention are Miss Doris Labbette, who sings charmingly two pleasant little songs (Col. 1466). This is the sort of voice and personality that is required for the air from *Der Frieschütz*. For those who really like good French soprano singing the Actuelle record of *L'air de l'oasis* gives Mme. Hedy an opportunity; on the other side is the usual song from *Madame Butterfly* (Actuelle 151417). Finally, there is one bass-baritone record of outstanding merit (Brun. 50033). I prefer Michael Bohnen's singing of *The Two Grenadiers* to Chaliapin's, which is saying a good deal, and it is a better record. On the other side is Wolfram's fine song from *Tannhäuser*. All the Brunswick records I have heard so far have been technically of the very highest class.

I imagine that our readers who have already bought the five records of Beethoven's Violin *Concerto* will agree with me in acclaiming such a publication as the outstanding event of the last quarter of 1923. Miss Menges has no warmer admirer than myself; but, lacking as I do the verbal ingenuity of a good musical critic, I can say no more to Miss Menges and Sir Landon Ronald and His Master's Voice than a deeply felt "Thank you." It is the fashion nowadays among our bright-eyed youth to find Beethoven boring. To such young men and women I would offer rubber teats to keep them quiet while I reminded them that the late Mr. Samuel Lewis, after driving round Rome for the first time, yawned, and said to his companion, "You can

have Rome." Well, give me Rome and Beethoven, and they can have Schönberg and New York. I do hope that all readers of THE GRAMOPHONE who can possibly afford the necessary 32/6 will acquire these records. They will gain from them a sense of security and peace amid the breaking glass of our time.

Last month Mr. Caskett was first hauled over the coals by a correspondent for not appreciating Strauss, and then the coals through which he had been hauled were heaped upon his head because he had not realised that the issue of *Tod und Verklärung* (H.M.V. D.743-4) was a feeler for the César Franck symphony. I agree with our correspondent in thinking that less than justice was done to these fine records; but how on earth the publication of the third of Strauss's symphonic poems by H.M.V. could possibly be related to that sublime symphony I do not know. Our correspondent seemed to think that Mr. Caskett's failure to react to the music was due to his living in London. This seems to me a paradox, for I should say that no music was more sick with city life than that of Strauss. At any rate, our correspondent cannot accuse my judgment of being tainted by London air. Any mistakes I make on my island must be attributed to excess of ozone, for the sound of the sea is perpetually in my ears, and lately, owing to the failure of a light, a buoy of definitely Straussian sympathies has been hooting and moaning all night long. Personally, I enjoyed *Tod und Verklärung*. To be sure, I thought until I examined the programme more carefully that the ticking of the clock was the death rattle; but such mistakes are bound to occur until programme musicians have perfected their alphabet. Had I not been told by the composer what my reaction to his music ought to be, I might perhaps have received the emotion he was trying to give me without putting it into words; but from the moment I have got to think that this drum is a clock and that melodious phrase "manhood's struggle with the world" my infernal fancy takes possession of me, and this chord becomes a hot-water bottle, while that recurrent theme is somebody coughing in the next bed. I find myself taking the oboe regularly three times a day after meals, and hope that the bassoon—I mean the doctor—will let me begin solids to-morrow. I note the temperature of the strings rising rapidly, and I am convinced that the wood-wind needs a carminative, the horns a strong aperient. However, let me cut out the programme, and I find *Tod und Verklärung* magnificent. Incidentally, I looked in vain for the gong bit, which was lost in the general crash of the climax. That is another disadvantage of programme music. I expect things, and feel as if I had been cheated out of them. I forget what the gong represents, but I wanted it. There are no gongs in César Franck's symphony.

The orchestral version of *The Willow Song* from *Othello*, by Edward German (H.M.V. D.772), makes a pleasant double-sided record, but it did not give me the idea that it would ever become a great favourite of mine. I did not care for the Columbia version of the *Pathetic Symphony* so much as the H.M.V., but in justice to Sir Henry Wood I ought to admit that I only played it over once when I was in London, and I should prefer our readers to decide for themselves between the two versions. One of the reasons why I did not pay more attention to it was that I spent so much time in playing over and over again the Mozart *Sonata in A* (Col. L.1494-5-6), with Hamilton Harty at the piano and Arthur Catterall on the violin. I have mislaid Groves and cannot find out the exact date when this was composed, but by the opus number Mozart must have been a boy, and I shall give myself the pleasure of thinking that its tranquil and lovely melodies first sang to his imagination when he visited London in 1764 and stayed in Cecil Court, just off Chandos Street. I wish I could think he had actually composed the sonata there. It would be some compensation for those desiccated nudities of Epstein at one end of Chandos Street, and for the insulting ugliness of Edith Cavell's statue at the other, and for that vegetarian restaurant where people looking like garden pests eat like garden pests. I wish that the neighbourhood could be redeemed by the birth of this sonata. It is in crystalline and radiant music like this that one appreciates at its full value the new Columbia process. He who buys these records on my advice will bless me. This quarter has given us two more *Planets* (Col. L.1499 and L.1509), and I like both *Venus* and *Uranus* better than *Jupiter*. I read somewhere that Mr. Holst is using the planets in their astrological and not in their mythological significance. As an astrologer myself I do not accept this. Venus well aspected might bring peace, but the influence of Uranus is scarcely known except that in the seventh house he is likely to upset the married life of the native. That is the worst of giving music names; it starts an argument right off. Here am I arguing about the name when I ought to be talking about the music. I wish that Mr. Holst had not called *Uranus* the magician. I have a picture of some one rather like Abanazar in the pantomime, and this is not altogether my fault because the composer himself has used a kind of bogey man theme. However, it is extraordinarily attractive and so is *Venus*. Delicious orchestration and first-rate recording—much better recording than *Jupiter* got—make these records desirable. The records by Columbia of Mr. Frank Bridge's *Sea Suite* are interesting to compare with Mr. McEwen's *Solway Symphony* issued earlier this year. Mr. Bridge's moonlight is not disturbed by motor boats as Mr. McEwen's was through having been recorded at the Vocalion's scratchiest time, but I think I prefer Mr. McEwen's. In both

of them I am asked to feel nautical. Frankly, I doubt if either of them would have made me feel nautical without the titles. Perhaps in my room they suffer from their proximity to the real thing. The *Hebrides Overture* of Mendelssohn has something of the sea in it, but the only piece of music I know that really does give me the sea unmistakably is Elgar's *Sabbath Morning at Sea* (H.M.V. D.675). It is remarkable how little the sea has inspired musicians. No composer of the very highest rank has been produced by a maritime country, just as on the other side no poet of the very highest rank has been produced by an inland country. Talking of the sea, I remember among the songs of last quarter the issue of Sir Charles Stanford's setting of Sir Henry Newbolt's *Songs of the Fleet* (Col. 1949-50-51). So long as Mr. Harold Williams is singing, these are effective enough on the gramophone; but *The Middle Watch*, not one word of which is distinguishable, is too dreary even for that dreary middle watch. I suppose Sir Charles alarmed the recorders too much to be cut; but I should have made a dog watch of that middle watch and defied his wrath. The other two records are excellent. Am I right in thinking that the *Dance Rhapsody* (Col. 1505-6) is the first piece of music by Delius to be recorded? I suppose it is very good and ingenious; but personally I see nothing particularly wonderful in taking an old English dance tune and treating it orientally. It is like something you see at a fancy dress ball in a country town; but I dare say lots of people will enjoy these records. They certainly will enjoy the fourth side, which is a delicious orchestration of *Tambourin*, a familiar melody on the violin to gramophonists. I am glad that Dr. Vaughan Williams' *London Symphony* has been done. I haven't received it from the London office yet (Col. L.1507-8), but readers will find an analysis in another column. I don't care for *The Merchant of Venice* music by Frederick Rosse (Col. L.1510-11); but no doubt many people will, and the recording is good. I wish the Aeolian Orchestra would do more orchestral records, particularly as their recording is improving all the time. We only have one this quarter, a minuet and rigadon from Ravel's *Couperin* (Voc. J.04044). Both sides are delightfully played. I recommend this record very strongly indeed and look forward to the first part of the suite. MacDowell's *Woodland Sketches* as played by the Regent Symphony Orchestra (Voc. K.05083) are pleasant, but at the same price (4/6) I much prefer Holst's *Suite for Military Band in F*, played by the Life Guards (Voc. K.05082). Columbia and H.M.V. have both done the other suite, and personally I like this one better. It seems to me a really first-class record. The Coldstream band gave us a curiously dull selection from *Traviata* (H.M.V. C.1122) and *Oliver Cromwell* (C.1128), which I fancy was the piece for the brass band competition this year. I

am glad that I wasn't at the Crystal Palace. The Grenadiers gave us *Haddon Hall* (Col. 936), and Columbia was also responsible for *A Musical Jig Saw* arranged by A. W. Aston (Col. 948), one of the best of these medleys I have heard.

Before I examine the chamber music of the quarter, let me enter a most violent protest against the way some of the music has been cut. I should have thought that by this time the recording companies had realised the existence of a sufficient number of intelligent purchasers to make this wax-paring policy ridiculous. Why spoil the issue of the first Brahms String Quartet (Op. 51, No. 2, Voc. D.02110, 02137) recorded for the gramophone by allowing the players to tear pieces out of the score whenever any of them wanted to light his cigarette? That is the impression made by the cutting. The result is that, since these records are useless for students, irritating to amateurs, and likely to seem dull to a large part of the public, the issue will probably be a commercial failure, after which we shall be told that there is no support for chamber music and that Brahms is out of fashion. I hope that this issue is a relic of the bad old days, and that it has been on the Vocalion stocks for some time. I will not suppose that the company is going to surrender to this vile habit. This is not a question of cutting a repeat, which is, I think, legitimate; this is a case of mutilation, and even Mr. Ernest Newman might be hard put to follow the London String Quartet in their steeplechase through the first movement. It really is exasperating, and if I may judge by the number of correspondents who have written to me on the subject, it is bad business. I really think that the mutilation of the Fauré Pianoforte Quartet by H.M.V. is even more criminal. Every time I have played it I have enjoyed it more, and I am confident that the complete recording would have made many converts to chamber music. The sin of H.M.V. is more heinous, because this is the first time that it has condescended to give more than the single movement of a quartet. The Beatrice-Hewitt combination is brilliant; the recording is magnificent; but as it stands the result is a mere torso. To say that the public would not have bought a complete quartet is no argument until the Voice has tried and failed to sell one; and in any case, it is no argument when the Voice is paying 15 per cent. and carrying forward £70,000 to next year. It is no *vox et praeterea nihil*! But don't boycott this poor mutilated music, for even the torso is lovely. Nobody spoke out more warmly than myself for the Léner Quartet when their first records were issued, and I can boast with perfect confidence that the readers of this paper were their earliest supporters. What is our reward? Judging by their last record, they want to play Punch and Judy with the Flonzaley Quartet and the London String Quartet. We already have Borodine's *Nocturne* (H.M.V. 08118)

divinely played by the Flonzaley, and that was a well carved snack. The Léner version is a badly carved snack, and their interpretation is buried under Cumberland sauce. Like an over-ripe pear the melody hangs on the wall till it is sleepy. On the other side they play the *Scherzo* from Tchaikovsky's Quartet in D, which has already been done by the L.S.Q. (Col. L.1015). It is well played, but, oh dear! It is sad to grumble like this in the first month of the New Year; but if the recording companies are going to mince their chamber music, I am not going to mince my words. Of other chamber music during the quarter we have the *Scherzo* from the fourth of Beethoven's early quartets (H.M.V. 08129), as beautifully played as usual by the Flonzaley Quartet, and two attractive *Novelettes* of Glazounov by the English String Quartet (Col. 940). We already have another of these played by the Flonzaley Quartet, *Interludium in Modo Antico* (H.M.V. 08103), a lovely excerpt. Other music includes an enjoyable *Phantasie* by Frank Bridge played by the English String Quartet (Col. 946), and Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* (Col. L.1503), an exceptionally lovely and well recorded trio. From the Vocalion Company we have the completion of Grieg's *Sonata in C*, arranged by Lionel Tertis for the viola in F minor. I think that I was unfair to these records last quarter. In the right mood I find the complete work satisfying. We have from the same company two more of Dvůrák's *Bagatellen*. I fancy that these pieces were originally written for the harmonium, two violins, and 'cello. They are vivacious and attractive, but they might have been postponed, I think, for trios of greater beauty and importance. Though Mr. Lionel Tertis is a superb viola player, the Vocalion Company must not become the slaves to his ingenious arrangements. The Rosé Quartet gave us the exquisite *Air and Variations* from the fifth of Beethoven's early quartets. The playing is good, its recording very poor. But no chamber music enthusiast can afford to miss it (Actuelle 15133.)

We have had some wonderful violin records this last quarter. Among these is the Brunswick presentation of Huberman (Brun. 50022). The pieces he plays are the stock-in-trade of the fiddler, but the recording is absolutely the best violin recording I have ever heard. Another record which should on no account be missed is the divine *Largo* from Bach's *Concerto in D minor* for two violins (Voc. D.02107) played by Jelly d'Arányi and Adila Fachiri. I don't know if any of my readers are still under the delusion that Bach is dull, but I beg any such to take me at my word and buy this record; they will be agreeably surprised by their own good taste. We have had plenty of other violin records during the quarter, but I am sick of writing down the stale old names of the pieces played. I recommend a xylophone record of Kreisler's music for a change. No, I am not joking (H.M.V. B.1708).

I am leaving out any mention of piano records, because somebody much more able than myself is writing about them in the next number. Before I conclude I want to mention a publication of the preceding quarter of Liszt's piano *Concerto in E flat* issued by the Velvet Face in two records (557-8). Mr. Andersen Tyrer's performance on the piano is as brilliant a piece of piano recording as you will get; the orchestra is less satisfactory and has that comb and tissue-paper effect from which the V.F. orchestral recording is inclined to suffer. Their experts are probably well aware of this fault, and I have no doubt whatever that it will soon be eliminated from their recording. However, these records are well worth getting, and they will be an excellent start for any of my readers who wish to make the acquaintance of the piano concerto on the gramophone. I must once more beg indulgence for many omissions in this review; but the quarter has been exceptionally heavy and I have already used more than my space this month. I had intended to turn aside from my musical autobiography and discuss two books, *A Musical Pilgrim's Progress*, by J. D. M. Rorke (H. Milford; 5/-), the second edition of which little classic has just reached me, and Dr. Agnes Savill's *Music, Health, and Character* (John Lane; 7/6), both of which I shall try to write about next month. Meanwhile, let me recommend all readers now making

their own voyages through music to get hold of both these books as soon as possible. Also to get hold of Dr. Percy A. Scholes' *The Listener's Guide to Music* (Humphrey Milford; 6/-). You must all of you buy a few books as well as records, or I shall begin to feel rather a blackleg in my profession.

The best vocal records for the last quarter of 1923:

O Paradiso (L'Africana) sung by James Hackett, tenor (Col. 7271), 7s. 6d. *Divinités du Styx (Alceste)*, sung by Maria Jeritza, soprano (H.M.V. 2-033090), 7s. 6d. *Il Lacerato spirito (Simon Boccanegra)* sung by Ezio Pinza, bass (H.M.V. 2-052240), 7/6. *Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix (Samson et Dalila and Gipsy Song (Carmen))*, sung by Sigrid Onegin, contralto (Brunswick 50018), 8s.

The best orchestral record: Beethoven's *Violin Concerto, Op. 61* (H.M.V. 767-771) 32s. 6d. Isolde Menges and R.A.H. Orchestra record conducted by Sir Landon Ronald.

The best chamber music: Mozart's *Sonata in A* (Col. 1494-5-6), 19s. 6d. Hamilton Harty (piano) and A. Catterall (violin).

The best violin record: Bach's *Concerto in D minor* (Voc. D.02107), 6s. 6d., played by Jelly d'Aranyi and Adilâ Fachiri.

Having been more than usually personal this month, I sign myself
COMPTON MACKENZIE.

Some Technical Notes

By Captain H. T. Barnett, M.I.E.E.

REGARDING the angle of 45 deg., which I prefer for the needle in place of the time-worn 60 deg., during the past year, and particularly since the issue of THE GRAMOPHONE for November last, I have received many letters from those who have made the change-over, if necessary, shifting the motor forward in order to bring the needle track alignment correct, and who are more than pleased they have done so; but I see in the December issue that H. F. L. V. differs. Let me assure him that I am not alone in favouring the 45 deg. angle; Mr. H. Seymour, Mr. C. B. Lenthall, the engineer of the Repeating ("Three Muses") Gramophone Company (who make the pretty little "Tremusa" sound-box that gives a fibre needle effect with the fine steel needle), and several others use this angle, and perhaps they will put their able pens to paper to say something on the subject in your correspondence columns. Knowing their quality, I feel confident they would not have made so radical a change without careful and long-continued experiment.

With regard to wear on records, I thought I made it clear that the record *must not* grind away the needle.

It is because the record *does* wear away the ordinary needle that the ordinary needle wears away the record. When the point of the fine steel needle is gone it must be changed; but it is so *hard* and so *tough* it will easily play twenty 10in. records before one can see a flat on the end of it. I always use my fine needles dead short up in the adapter in order to get a good full tone. Flexibility in a needle will cause one to hear a flattening in pitch, as the needle gradually takes up to its work when meeting a full chord or strong high note, and it is also inimical to the life not only of soprano but of all records, for it can easily "chatter" in the groove. I have just had a talk with Mr. Fred Jackson about injury to soprano records, and he tells me the goose-neck tone arm is often contributory to the same unfortunate result by reason of the shortness of the lever-length carrying the sound-box and the occasional looseness of the joint of the curved end, and he is not sure that the strong back reflection of interference tone from the butt-end of the goose-neck may not be even a bigger factor than the mechanical ones.

The point I have just mentioned in reference to the readjustment of the needle track alignment

(by shifting the motor forward) when changing over from 60 to 45 deg. needle angle, is an important one, and it should be remembered it is just as important a question when changing from a small sound-box to a big one. If you are changing from a small box to the 65 mm. and altering your needle-angle at the same time, of course one shifting of the motor will put you right for both changes. For the benefit of novices, let me say that the needle track will follow the best line it can do if, when the tone arm is swung inwardly, the needle point will touch the *middle* of the spindle and the record at the same time.

If you read what I had to say last month about "Choosing a Sound-box," you may be wondering what tests I should require a sound-box to pass satisfactorily before I could say "It is perfect."

As I said before, with an imperfect machine, an imperfect sound-box may give better average results than a perfect one; but, of course, to see if a sound-box is perfect one *must* have a pure-toned machine to test it on. Now suppose you have a correct machine to test your sound-boxes on, you had better, then, arrange these tests so that they answer the following questions: (1) What amount of surface noise is made? (2) What is the tone volume produced? (3) Is the tone volume from the various parts of the scale (from the lowest to the highest) similar to that of the recording instrument? (4) Is it "dead beat," or does it show the full resonance recorded? (Does it sustain well?) (5) Is there a tendency to "blast" on one or on more parts of the scale? (6) Is there roughness or rattle?

The question of weight and wear on the record I leave out absolutely, because with modern fine needles set about at 45 deg. angle, there is no wear whatever on a record of good composition, even with a heavy sound-box and tone arm. For the same reason I do not consider the relative length or shortness of the needle end of the stylus bar.

To deal with the various questions seriatim:

(1) SURFACE NOISE.

I put this first because I cannot endure a scratchy box, no matter how good its other qualities may be. Everyone will admit that nothing destroys the illusion of "the instrument in the room" so much as does "the fried fish shop."

Of course, you will not use a modern fine needle for *this* test, they are so quiet, nor will you use a record having a very good surface. Use a record having little tone and plenty of quiet places in it, say a Zono. harp record, and any ordinary loud needle.

If you are giving marks for points it is only fair you should consider the proportionate relation of scratch noise to total tone volume, for it is obviously unfair to expect a box giving you a big tone not to transmit more surface noise than a box of small tone, not that there is any real relation whatever

between the two things, for transmission of surface noise in any given box depends entirely on the *nature and thickness of the diaphragm*.

(2) TONE VOLUME.

An easy test. Use a record covering the whole scale; one essentially kind to every fault the ordinary sound-box has. I use the Winner pianoforte record *Prelude*, probably the finest pianoforte record yet made for all-round tone.

(3) SCALE BALANCE.

This is very important. Nothing is more horrid than a box favouring the treble unduly. I much prefer a box weak in the treble to one weak in the bass; but if your box is the right size (generally about 65 mm.), and has a diaphragm neither too thick nor too thin, it ought to be good all over the scale. The record mentioned under (2) is also a good test record under this heading; but you should also use another, *Hungarian Dances 1 and 2—Violin, Regal*; a magnificent record.

(4) SUSTAINING POWER.

Try it with the exquisite pianoforte record *Paderewski's Minuet*, Paderewski, H.M.V.; listen out for the wonderful note. Also try it with an upright piano record, the wonderful Beltona *Kitten on the Keys*, and see that it does not make the effect staccato.

(5) BLAST.

Try three beautiful records: *Tango de Rêve*, Homochord; *Le Cygne*, 'cello, Beltona; and *Poet and Peasant*, Ocarina (Zonophone 320).

(6) RATTLE.

Try it with the Homo. piano record *Polonaise Militaire* (Scholzoff).

(7) INSTRUMENTAL CHARACTERISTIC.

Try it with the 1812 *Overture* (Col. 576); *Mattinata*, Cornet and Grand Piano (Zono. 1341); *The Hall of the Mountain King*, Band (Beltona 118); and *The Passing of Salome*, Band (Imperial 965). If your box will play these four grand records and the others before mentioned to your satisfaction, you need have no fear that it will not show to advantage with any vocal record whatever.

There are no consonants in instrumental music, I know; but if the *mass* of the stylus bar and the active part of the diaphragm are such as not readily to follow those tiny waves constituting consonant sounds, then certainly the box will be eliminated during one or other of the foregoing tests.

For years I have been trying to get away from mica for sound-box diaphragms, one never finds two plates alike; and it is such weather-moody stuff, and so unmechanical in every way. I have tested every 65 mm. diaphragm I could get with the greatest care, but always have found some acoustic shortcoming that drove me back to mica again, very often after moderately well-founded hope that I was going to get away from it.

"SAY IT WHILE DANCING!"

(H.M.V. B.1654)

By HARRY MELVILL.

THE title of one of the year's best tunes seems suitable for my own first GRAMOPHONE record. In 1923 we have talked while we have danced, for the strident and the strepitous have surrendered to the subtly syncopated. The year has given us wonderful bands, wonderful melodies, one wonderful new dancing-floor and one new rhythm—but no new steps. Gone are the days when anxious faces betrayed concern as to the partner's ability to adapt herself to a new development, and when a chance reflection on her part was apt to put one out of one's stride.

The bands have been, as I have said, wonderful. Paul Whiteman, hitherto known to us only through the records, introduced us to brass instruments of vast size and barbaric splendour susceptible of infinite modulation. Will Vodery's Orchestra from the "Plantation," appearing at a private party, proved once more that black faces, like Oriental china, blend admirably with eighteenth-century decoration. These American visitors, white and coloured, less hospitably received by the Ministry of Labour than by the dancing public, have left our shores; but Ambrose at the "Embassy" and the "Lambs" band remain with us. The former's violin has a special soothing quality, which makes one almost forget that the saxophone and the drum are the really essential instruments for modern dance-music, while the latter have a certain "pep," which enables their newly-acquired lions to enjoy their circular dancing floor after a gayer fashion, and water-whistles, which temper the wood-wind to their "shingled" lambs!

The tunes have been so many and varied that it is a matter of difficulty to make a selection of the very best. Consecrated by the approval of our dancing Prince, *Running Wild* (H.M.V. B.1673) is probably the most popular of all, with *Non-stop Dancing* (H.M.V. B.1693) a good second. Both, in spite of their strenuous titles, belong to the dreamy variety of fox-trot, while *Romany Love* (H.M.V. B.1455) and *Marcheta* (H.M.V. B.1713) have a peculiar castanet quality, which seems to invite the pauses of the Spanish *paso doble* so popular in Paris; but, like the tango, neglected here. The latter I have heard irreverently nicknamed the "frogs-trot," and I have no doubt the French have retaliated by pointing out that a nation of fox-hunters were predestined to become almost exclusively fox-trotters! *When Hearts are Young* (H.M.V. B.1556) (which Paul Whiteman told me himself he considered the best record he had made),

and *Are You Playing Fair?* (H.M.V. B.1459) appear to me two such perfect examples of fox-trot form that I venture to analyse them after the manner of a Queen's Hall programme. In the case of the latter the first subject is introduced by the brass and then elaborately embroidered by the saxophones. The second subject is in the march time, which is an essential variant of the fox-trot step, and is followed by a sparkling piano solo (by Zez Confrey) before the first subject returns in coda form. *When Hearts are Young* has for its principal theme an air which, as befits a pagan pæan of joyous youthfulness, is appropriately ushered in by water-whistles and returns with a throbbing harplike effect, produced by a subtle combination of saxophone and banjo. *By the Shalimar* (H.M.V. B.1659) (one of Ambrose's favourites), *Chansonette* (H.M.V. B.1658), *Swinging Down the Lane* (H.M.V. B.1676), *Dirty Hands*, *Dirty face* (H.M.V. B.1717), *My Sweetie went away* (H.M.V. B.1704) *Blue* (H.M.V. B.1408), (with its lingering "diminuendo" for the water-whistle), and *Pretty Peggy* (Col. A 3989), based on an intoxicating Viennese valse "motif," all deserve honourable mention before we leave the fox-trots.

The valse, alas, is danced too rarely, and *Wonderful One* (H.M.V. B.1639), *Honeymoon Chimes* (H.M.V. B.1696) and *Hylda* (Victor 19028 A) are the only notable contributions to its répertoire. The last-named is exquisitely played on the saxophone by its composer, Clyde Doerr, and both the others, like all vales danced in the "hesitation" manner, depend for their full effect on being led by the saxophone rather than by the violin.

The best one-steps (also in comparative disfavour) include *I'm just wild about Harry* (H.M.V. B.1407) (with its memories of Florence Mills), and *The Whiteness of the Whatness* (H.M.V. B.1719) (with those of the Astaires). Let me observe in this connection that, while our interest in watching dancing on the stage is as keen as ever, we prefer to keep the floor to ourselves. The "Embassy" and the "Lambs," the two most popular clubs of the moment, eschew both professional dancers and cabaret-shows, which fail to excite enthusiasm amongst others than the few remaining "wall-flowers" at those where they figure.

The year 1923 has given us—or, more politely, some of us—"the Blues," which possess undoubtedly an interesting, albeit a monotonous, new rhythm. I have not seen it danced on Broadway, but I fancy it is not yet there or elsewhere what Broadway

would call "standardised." The majority of those whom I have seen dancing it "on this side," appear to imagine that it is a species of "slow-motion" fox-trot, which my musical ear, such as it is, tells me it cannot be. Without venturing to suggest what it really is, I confess to having several times attentively watched Miss Nora Bayes singing her *Yes, we have no Bananas Blues* (H.M.V. B.1720). The suggestion then conveyed to me by her feet was that of the tango and the suggestion wafted to me by her giant fan was that of a swaying cornfield. Forgive me, Blues, if I have misinterpreted. It is the best I can do for you.

Let me close this little retrospect with two cheerful messages. Ladies, your lines continue perfectly suited to the pleasant dancing places in which they have been so constantly cast. Gentlemen, you are—almost all of you—dancing better than you did. The drum is doing its work and teaching you to discard a national disposition to hop. Did not Nietzsche say somewhere that he would not believe in a god who did not know how to dance? At any rate, it must serve as to-day's great thought, and it is less hackneyed than wishing you all "A Happy New Year," isn't it?

Wavy-tone Records or "Swingers."

By T. W. WOODHOUSE.

WHEN you have spent 7s. 6d. or so on a record of a favourite piece of music, you sometimes find yourself sadly disappointed on sitting down to test and enjoy your purchase in your quiet home. The longer notes "wave" up and down very slightly, keeping time with the revolving of the turntable. In piano records the chords sound "sour." In songs such as *O Lovely Night*, and in orchestral effects such as the beginning and end of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* Overture, or the long notes in *Rienzi* Overture, the "pitch" is miserably uncertain, and "swings" just enough to make you disgusted with something—you hardly know what. In such cases, just take a look at the sound-box while the machine is running, and you will probably find it "swinging" from *side to side*, owing to the hole for the pin being out of centre.

The scientific explanation of the fault is easy. The pitch of a note is higher or lower, according to the speed of its vibrations. Therefore, if the needle swings away from the centre of the turntable the pitch rises—the circle at that moment having a *bigger radius*. If the needle then swings inwards towards the centre (as it must in turn), the pitch of the note, or chord, is lowered. There is a sense of insecurity of tonality, even in lively musical items, but in quiet cantabile or sustained notes or chords, the musical ear is lamentably worried, and the disc is apt to be placed among those seldom used.

The matter boils down to this—judge a record by the eye as much as by the ear when testing it in a shop. View with suspicion an up-and-down swing, but condemn utterly any record which causes the sound-box to swing from side to side in a marked degree.

And now for the cure. No doubt many people, like myself, have favourite records already in their collections, which are, or have been, a trouble instead of a source of delight. Test such records in view of the foregoing remarks, and if they are "swingers," tackle them in good earnest, and you may turn records not worth 2d. each into real gems.

First, enlarge the centre hole, procure a fibre needle to avoid damage during the "cure," play the record very slowly, tap the edge of the disc lightly and patiently until there is a *minimum* of swinging from side to side. Now play the record with your usual needle, and note the improvement. If you are satisfied cut two small pieces of *hard* cardboard, not too thick; form a V in one edge of each; coat one card with seccotine and push the V close up to the centre pin, leaving it to stick in position. Do the same with the other piece of cardboard. When these V pieces are fixed securely and accurately in position, you can always rely on a performance that will please you—unless, of course, there is some untruth in the machine itself, or some independent fault in the record. Try, first, with a single-sided disc, as this is an easy experiment.

It often happens that in double-sided discs one side is "trued-up" satisfactorily, but the other side is still untrue. A large record-maker once told me that such a record is incurable, but it is not so. Some of my best discs have had this fault, and have been cured; but more trouble is involved. It is well worth while, nevertheless. Proceed as already described. Then, when the cards are firmly stuck, turn the disc over and note the "swing." If the performance is bad and the music is *valued*, you can begin again your labour of love. Use a fibre needle, and note the point in the disc where the sound-box is thrown farthest outward. Make a pencil mark, and test repeatedly to make sure of the exact point. Then cut away the card *at that point*, sufficiently to permit you to tap the disc until it runs true. Fix a new cardboard V (only one), close up to the pin on the side adjacent to the pencil mark. You have now two positions fixed, for the one disc. That is, you have a separate and instantly fixed position for each side, and your disc, instead of a failure, will be a thing to be proud of, and you can win your friends' gratitude by rescuing some of *their* favourites from oblivion.

THE MASTERSINGERS

By THE EDITOR.

THE Gramophone Company in presenting the public with the fifteen double-sided discs that go to make up *The Mastersingers* may congratulate itself on the greatest operatic triumph that any recording company has hitherto achieved. I have played the records completely through four times, and a great many of them nine or ten times, with different instruments, needles, and sound-boxes, and I have certainly spent not less than twelve hours in listening to them. It seems to me almost miraculous that, so far as the technical accomplishment of the gramophone is concerned, I have not found one flaw. They are good with fibre needles, with medium steel needles, and with loud-tone needles; they are good with composition diaphragms and with mica diaphragms. I do not recall any records in which the quality of massed strings is better rendered, nor any records in which the chorus has been more artfully handled. Having said so much by way of astonished and delighted praise, I have to utter one or two grumbles. In the first place—and this has *nothing* to do with the recording—I have to complain that on each of the vocal sides, representing nearly two hours' singing, I could distinguish at most three complete phrases and about a dozen isolated words—not so many English words on any of these records as the Italian words I was able to distinguish in Charles Hackett's very short single-sided record of *O Paradiso*. I admit that it is far more difficult for a singer to get his words through Wagner's music than Meyerbeer's; but it is not proportionately so much more difficult. I have two records by English singers of *The Flower Song* from *Carmen*, one by Tudor Davies (H.M.V. 6739) and one by Frank Titterton (Voc. D.02134). I can distinguish three-quarters of Mr. Titterton's words, scarcely one of Mr. Tudor Davies's. So I am going to blame Mr. Davies, and not Wagner. I have long ago given up trying to distinguish the words that Mme. Austral sings; yet from a dramatic soprano one has the right to demand a diction that one does not expect from a coloratura soprano. Mercifully, the music of *The Mastersingers* is so lovely that one really does not mind about the words; but unless British singers realise that what stands between them and the public appreciation of their efforts to which they think they are entitled is their own indistinct enunciation, we shall see British national opera come to an end. It is not as if they made up for it by being able to act. Take, for instance, the *Finale* of *Carmen* sung by Farrar and Martinelli (H.M.V. 2-034022—2-034024). Farrar's French is handicapped by a raging American accent; Martinelli's has the usual tin-can effect of all Italians who try to sing in French;

and yet these two records are, in my opinion, the two finest vocal records ever issued in their ability to convey not merely the words, not merely the music, but also the drama. If opera is going to be turned into oratorio the theatres may as well close their doors and the concert-halls open theirs. After what I have just said about the singing and the acting it may sound a double-edged compliment to say that I think the Gramophone Company should have had the courtesy to make some acknowledgment of the work of the British National Opera Company, both in these records and in the preceding Wagner issues. It is certainly not their fault that British singers will not learn to sing distinctly. Personally I should have given Browning Mummery the preference over Tudor Davies for Walter throughout; but he certainly should have been allowed to sing David's song to Walter, who might then have heard some of the rules. I can only describe it simply as fatuous to let Tudor Davies follow his first duet with Eva by singing to himself as David. It would have only been a little more fatuous to have made Tudor Davies sing both Walter's part and David's in the glorious quintet. After some attractive soprano singing by Miss Doris Lemon as Magdalena in the earlier records, a new and contralto Magdalena joins the quintet in the person of Miss Nellie Walker. I believe I am right in thinking that Magdalena was originally cast for a mezzo-soprano. We haven't even yet reached the end of this fatuous confusion of parts, for we find Mr. Radford doubling Pogner and Hans Sachs and thereby introducing an unnecessary monotony in the music. I do not know whether this doubling of parts is due to the mysterious laws that govern the colours of discs, whereby Mr. Greening (I mean Mr. Browning) Mummery or Mr. Plum-coloured Coltham must not find themselves performing solo to the detriment of Mr. Black Tudor Davies, just as in the *Valkyrie* records Wotan played a game of *rouge-et-noir* between Mr. Clarence Redhill (I mean Whitehill) and Mr. Black Robert Radford. Whatever the explanation, the result gives just that irritating impression of amateurishness which mars most English films. I dare say I shall be told that I don't know what I am talking about and that the duplication of parts was unavoidable for various reasons; but I know quite well that the public is as much puzzled by these anomalies of casting as myself. However, apart from this doubling, which is a comparatively minor fault, and the indistinctness of the singers, which will surprise no purchaser, this generous issue of records is a tremendous achievement, and both we and the dog may fairly claim henceforth to be listening to *His Mastersinger's Voice*.

MY GRAMOPHONE

By IVOR NOVELLO

I AM inclined to think that the gramophone is, as a general rule, treated far too cavalierly and taken far too much as a matter of course. Nowadays when there is so little time for anything that one is apt to get bored to tears doing nothing, there exists a very intelligible inclination in men and women to accept the most startling, the most epoch-making discoveries and inventions much in the light of presents cut from the branches of a Christmas-tree, as a matter of right. Every year there must, of course, be a Christmas-tree, and with it goes a half-hour of excitement about what the various parcels may contain. The joy of revelation, however, is singularly transitory. What appeared to be a miracle at 4.30 has become a bore by dinner-time.

The swift, overwhelming, revolutionary events of the last decade have driven perspective into a corner. Believing this, I am genuinely afraid that the incredible gift to humanity of the gramophone has not been fully realised, not justly appreciated at its highest and its proper value.

Let me explain. I am a musician. Just as a man who has served his time in the Army, or who has gone through the exhaustive process of Cooper's Hill, or who has burrowed his way to the right to wear a wig and gown, is entitled to call himself respectively a soldier, an engineer, a barrister, so may I lay claim to the status of a trained musician. I wish to emphasise the point because it is my considered opinion that far more is to be learnt from the gramophone than from the prolonged pursuit of the ordinary routine of academic musical study.

It must be the experience of most music-loving people to hear for the first time some great work either at the opera or at a concert. What has their experience been? Have they come away with any tangible impression in their minds? Have they, the next day, been able to remember phrases, to cogently and co-ordinately criticise their feelings, their reactions and their opinions? I wonder! It has been my experience to be sensitively overwhelmed by music, without knowing why. I have been receptive to a degree, but quite unintellectually. I have carried away with me a memory, incalculable in effect, but nebulous, illusory, nothing that I can label and add to my stock of knowledge. It is in this connection that I consider the gramophone so invaluable.

At the opera or at a concert when it has become the end and one is left dazed, groping and eager to a degree—not for an "encore"—but for silence, and once again one is condemned to compete with jostling crowds and go out into the night with something only partly gathered, dimly outlined, and

terribly, maddeningly disturbing, stabbing at one's brain. If only it had been possible—and now it is so—to listen in quietude as many times as inclination or unsatisfied longing chose to determine, to that same piece, until one had thoroughly learnt it—because one must learn music—and then go and hear it let loose in all its perfection of human interpretation armed with your own appreciation, which will flow forth to meet it and make it mean something! The gramophone has made such an experience possible for everyone.

That is why I contend that the educational value of the gramophone is grossly underestimated, if not positively overlooked. The gramophone can teach music as no other medium that I know can do, and in the most fascinating way. After all, is there anything in life more desirable than the repetition of its pleasures? Suppose for one glorious fantastic moment that you had the power just to command the recapitulation of *L'Après Midi d'un Faune*, instantly, before the stifling curtains had had time to meet and decree the end. That, musically speaking, is brought within your reach by the gramophone.

In the studied seclusion of your own room, belonging to you, evocative of you, with nothing extraneous, nothing disturbing, no risk of interruption on the part of temperamentally alien surroundings or people, you may dredge your soul to its depths, drown your senses and cultivate, as cruelly as you care, your thoughts, master of the music that plays at your will and at your pleasure.

There is another point that I should like to make in addition to the enormous educational value possessed by the gramophone. It has never been my privilege to hear Galli-Curci herself sing. One day I heard her on the gramophone. I was, one might say, introduced to her by the gramophone. If there had been no gramophone I might, so haphazard and chanceful is life, never have heard her. As it was, I was enabled to listen to her wonderful voice, and, having heard it, could buy record after record of her singing to place in my library and take down and listen to whenever I wish, just as a bibliophile handles his volumes. Books, however, are any one's property for all time, while a voice, alas! is a rare gift and but short-lived, belongs to one person, and once gone can never be recaptured.

To my mind, therefore, the gramophone is one of the greatest benefits humanity has been allowed in our time. Its educational value is immense, and the fact that it can bring to everyone voices and personalities who would otherwise remain strangers, is, in a helter-skelter world, some one thing that is really worth while.



THE NEW-POOR PAGE

By H. T. B.

Half-crown and Two-shilling
records good on both sides



IT has always given me far greater pleasure to find a good cheap record than a good dear one. Certainly the task is a difficult one (that is why it interests me), the makers of cheap records finding it pay far better to cater principally for working-class custom rather than for the patronage of those more musically critical. But I believe that to-day there are many to whom the price of a record is a very real factor in determining whether it can be bought or not; so to indicate each month some records that will take high marks in a considered judgment and yet be inexpensive may be useful, not only to purchasers but also to the record-making firms, and may serve in course of time, as the weight of the purchases becomes felt, to increase the proportion of musically good records among the long-priced records available. I shall try to give as much variety as possible, for there are lovers of all kinds of records, and few will wish to buy more than a small proportion of those I shall mention.

Before we get to work let me remind owners of small machines that a small horn *cannot* reproduce the correct tone and scale balance of instruments having large resonators or large resonating columns of air.

Now for the records:—PIPE ORGAN: *Hallelujah Chorus* (Regal). Owners of large gramophones sometimes like to show that their machine can reproduce organ tone well. Short of the 3/- *Bach's Fugue* (Columbia), this is the best organ record I know for this purpose. GRAND PIANO: *Rustle of Spring* (Winner). One of the wonderful Marie Novello series. PIANOFORTE: *Liszt's Impromptu in A flat* (Homo.). All the Homochord piano series are very brilliant. PIANO FOX-TROTS: *My Sweetie went away* (Homo.) and *Try to Play it* (Regal). The former is the better to dance to, but the latter is most interesting from the point of view of prolific and pretty invention. Regal piano records are nearly as brilliant as and less "dead beat" than Homo.'s. ACTUAL CHURCH BELLS: *Bow Bells* (Homo.). The first half-crown example of these, I believe. More interesting than beautiful. HARP: *Megan's Daughter* (Zono.). An exquisite record for a large machine. It is very important that a fine needle should be used or it will show too much scratch. The needle should project from the adapter only a very short distance in order to get a full tone. MEZZO-SOP.: *Hand in hand* (Aco). Cleanly sung, and with a particularly pretty accompaniment, showing the celeste. 'CELLO: *Abendstandchen* (Parlo.). Easily the very best cheap 'cello record I know. A hard needle should be used for each playing.

VIOLIN: *Meditation, Thais* (Aco). Exceptionally good tone. *Air on the G string* (Regal). *Spring Song*, Mendelssohn (Imperial). One of the few examples that goes at the right tempo. VIOLIN AND MUSTEL ORGAN: *Dance of the Elves* (Zono.). If you have an exceptionally good gramophone, the *vox-humana*-like tone of Elsie Southgate's valuable old Italian fiddle will be very noticeable as soon as the violin tone comes in. CORNET: *In an Old-fashioned Town. The Rosary* (Imperial). TENOR SONGS: *A Brown Bird Singing* (Winner). A new and favourite song, most charmingly sung and with perfect enunciation. Mr. Gerald Adams will be a singer to follow. *River Shannon Moon* (Beltona). Patrick Donoghue sings this perfectly. CONTRALTO: *Before you Came. Till Dawn*. I never heard a better ten-inch pair than these. Edith Furnedge will also be one to follow in the future. An exceptionally good record. BARITONE: *Because of You. When all the world is young, lad*. Sung by Peter Dawson (Zono.). *The Floral Dance. The Admiral's Yarn* (Zono.). COMEDIANS: *Oh, that Mistletoe Bough* (Winner). The nicest comedy record I have heard this season. NURSERY TALE (no effects): *The three little pigs. The three little bears* (Zono.). SCOTS RECITATION: *My Communicative Friend* (Beltona). Extraordinarily clear enunciation. SMALL ORCHESTRA: *Whispering Flowers* (Regal). *Invitation to the Waltz* (Regal). MILITARY BAND: *Scènes Pittoresques* (Imperial). *Light Cavalry Overture. The War March of the Priests* (Aco). The latter, in my opinion, goes too fast. *Henry VIII. Dances* (Beltona). WALTZ, and MARCH: *The Spring-time of Love. The Guards' Parade. Life Guards' Band* (Imperial). CONCERTINA: *Silver Heels, Rutherford* (Winner). This concertina solo needs speeding up a little. XYLOPHONE: *Pigtails and Chopsticks* (Winner). Probably the most pleasing of these. HAWAIIAN: *Pua Carnation* (Winner). *Who stepped on the cat's tail?* SAXOPHONE: *Gladioli* (Parl.). My best. SMALL ORCHESTRA WITH HARP: *Pastoral Dance* (Beltona). Very beautiful. TONE POEM: *Life Divine*. Foden's Prize Band (Winner). Hard.

I have put these records down just as they came to my hand during a week spent in selecting them, and I have purposely avoided giving catalogue information for the reason that I wish you to get the catalogues containing the records you think you will like from your dealer, and then you will see the series that each record comes from, and in the event of your not liking the pair on the record I mention you may be tempted to try some of the others.

Five Pounds' Worth of Records for Christmas

THE dilemma about the Laughing Record which I mentioned last month (p. 133) was solved when Rapley came home with the Parlophone Laughing Record, which is better in itself than either the Scala or the Winner and has on the reverse an excellent example of what a band can do with a march without the aid of drums. As far as I can judge from the few specimens that I have heard, the Parlophones are likely to provide us with some valuable cheap records in the near future; but the most remarkable of the half-crowners that I have encountered so far is a Scala record on which Mme. Emskaja has sung two Russian songs. They are delivered with immense spirit and beauty of phrasing, and I am told that the pronunciation of the Russian is very fine and clear; but I am not sure that other people will *enjoy* them as much as I do. However, I put this record on my list, which by the way has caused me more heart-searching than I should have thought possible. I was obliged to part company with Rapley early in the quest because his preferences were in the direction of ballads. Grace Ivell, Ivor Foster and Robert Carr (Winner) and Stephen Langley (Aco) figured on his first list, while he has an unaccountable—to me—admiration for Mr. Billy Desmond (also Aco). He likes cornets, accordions and banjos, and is ravished by birds singing or bells ringing, as in records of the *Monastery Garden* and *Village Blacksmith* type. I have built up my list carefully, but I am not prepared to back it against Capt. Barnett's, nor to pretend that I have done more than dip my wing in the ocean of cheap records. There are still thousands which I have never heard. But I shall be surprised if anyone buys any of my forty and is disappointed by what he or she gets.

I start with some of the music which every band and orchestra plays.

(1) WINNER 2039: *Pilgrim's March* and *Grand March* from *Tannhäuser*, a noisy but fine record, played by the Empire Guards Band. (2) BELTONE 178: *Ballet de Sylvia*, and (3) BELTONE 171: *Coppelia Ballet*, both played by the Sutherland Orchestra. (4) and (5) REGAL G.6105-6: *Ballet Egyptien*, Palace Guards Band. (6) and (7) IMPERIAL 1024-5, *William Tell Overture*, Band of the 1st Life Guards, very fine. (8) BELTONE 118: *Morning* and *In the Hall of the Mountain King* (Peer Gynt), Band of the Scots Guards. The latter as Capt. Barnett said, is surprising. (9) IMPERIAL 1029: *Barcarolle* from *Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Till's Serenade*, charmingly played by the Ackroyd Trio, violin, flute and harp. (10) WINNER 3027: *Hungarian Dances* No. 1 (Brahms) and *Czardas* No. 6 (Michiels), the Bohemian Band, which I choose for the sake of the latter. I nearly rejected it on account of the maddening rallentandos of the former.

That is twenty-five shillings spent on very familiar music, but music which is rightly familiar. The next quarter is instrumental too. (11) REGAL G.7821: *Hungarian Dances*, Nos. 1 and 2 (Brahms-Joachim), played by Manuella. (12) WINNER 2340: *Air de Ballet* and *Godard's Mazurka* and (13) WINNER 2443: *Prelude in C sharp Minor* (Rachmaninoff) and *Liebestraume* (Liszt), both deliciously played by Marie Novello. (14) HOMO-

CHORD H.366: *Kitten on the Keys* and *Regimental Patrol*, played by Theo Ward on the piano also. I suppose I have a weakness for dance music on the piano, for I must add (15) HOMOCHORD H.393: *Blue* and *Toot-toot-tootsie*, played by Stanley Holt, and (16) ZONO. 2350: *Monkey Blues* and *Lovin' Sam*, played by the inimitable Max Darewski. I must find room for another Sutherland Orchestra record; (17) BELTONE 310: *Mignon Gavotte* and *Hearts and Flowers*; and, rather diffidently, for one of Olley Oakley's brilliant banjo solos; (18) WINNER 2046: *Sweet Jessamine* and *Poppies and Wheat*. (19) REGAL G.7817: *Paderewski's Minuet* and *Valse Bluette*, played by the Regal Orchestra and an old favourite of mine (20) ZONO. 1698: *A little Love* and *Where my Caravan has Rested*, played by the Miss Southgates on violin and Mustel organ, complete this section.

For vocal records I begin with (21) WINNER 2436: *Madrigal* and *The Flowers that bloom in the Spring*, splendidly sung by Mmes. Augarde and May and Messrs. Virgo, Kirkby and Robert Carr. For well-known songs finely sung and clearly enunciated I choose (22) WINNER 2457: *Scots wha hae* and *A man's a man*, by Archie Anderson and (23) HOMOCHORD H.463: *Widdecombe Fair* and *Jan's Courtship*, by Robert Howe. For sheer balladry (24) SCALA 388: *Who?* (Tosti) and *Yonder* (Oliver), sung by Tudor Davies; and as a brilliant freak (25) SCALA 512: *Haida Troika* and *Die Traue Glanz un Ange*, two Russian Cabaret songs, sung by Mme. Emskaja. Then I must add (26) ZONO. 2364: *That's the tune* and *I want a Girl to Fox-trot*, with Stroud Haxton singing and Max Darewski at the piano; and I must have a Melville Gideon song, say (27) ZONO. 2367: *I ain't a-goin' no more a-roaming* and *Secrets*. With (28) BELTONE 104: *Peggy O'Neil*, sung by Gerald Banister and *Pucker up and whistle*, played with great spirit by the New Orleans Dance Orchestra, I pass on to dance music and must confess that I find the welter in the catalogues very confusing. The Grosvenor Dance Orchestra always seem to me both good to dance to and pleasant to listen to, so I will put down (29) ZONO. 2357: *Dearie if you knew* and *Gliding* and add (30) ACO G.15262: *Barney Google* and *Whistling*, by the Whitehall Dance Orchestra.

The last section must be miscellaneous. (31) shall be PARLOPHONE E.5078: *Laughing Record* (that *Kruschen feeling*) and *The Middy March*, by the Parlophone Orchestra, and (32) SCALA 7029: *Bedtime Stories*, or some similar record which will please the younger members of the family. (33) out of deference to Rapley shall be WINNER 3354: *The Village Blacksmith*, which is undoubtedly a very fine performance by the Foden Prize Brass Band. There are many beautiful Christmas Carol records, but I have only room for one (34) ACO G.15304: *While Shepherds watched* and *Christians awake*, by a mixed but single-minded quartet consisting of Mair Jones, Winifred West, Gwilym Wigley and David Brazell. (35) shall be ZONO. 1553: *'Arry and Family at the Zoo*, which is so well done by "Frank Leo and Party" that if it was a little better it would be a classic. (36) IMPERIAL 1023: *Marche Lorraine* and *Un peu d'Amour* is played with spirit and precision by the band of the 1st Life Guards and on the whole I am inclined to add another of their records (37) IMPERIAL 1022: *Weymouth Chimes* and *Sambre et Meuse* for the sake of the brilliant recording of bells in the former. (38) ACTUELLE 10457: *Fate* and *Red Moon Waltz*, by Nathan Glantz and his orchestra can hardly be omitted, nor can (39) ZONO. 2399: *The Cat's Whiskers* and *Slow Blues Fox-trot*, by the Original Capitol Orchestra. I shall complete the list in a seasonable mood with (40) ACO G.15308: *Christmas Time in Merrie England*, a most cheerful performance by the R.A. Band.

Phew! that's done! There are, of course, two main dangers in cheap records, blasts and imperfect centering, both of which ruin a great number that I was forced to reject. And perhaps I am over-sensitive; I rather suspect that Rapley enjoys a blast now and then, and he certainly looks up in surprise whenever I rush to lift up the lid of my gramophone and see whether the sound-box is wobbling.

PEPPERING.

Analytical Notes and Translations

(Acknowledgments are made to Chester's Library and to Messrs. Goodwin & Tabb for the loan of scores.)

SONATA IN F MINOR (Op. 57) (Beethoven), played by FREDERIC LAMOND (H.M.V. D.773—D.774).—This sonata, called "appassionata" by Beethoven's enterprising publisher, presumably for commercial reasons, is one that lies right outside the amateur pianist's abilities, and so a complete recording of it is very welcome. It is one of the greatest of Beethoven's "second period" works, and, as Ernest Walker says in his excellent little book on Beethoven (John Lane): "From the first note to the last the composer's strong sombre grip never relaxes."

Parts I. and II. are the First Movement (*allegro assai*) which, though there are other short themes, is made practically out of one tune hinted at in the opening bars and, later, more fully stated. It is a fine tune that easily remains in the memory. The *Coda* (or postscript) at the end of Part II. (after a four-note phrase with a family likeness to the first tune of the Fifth Symphony), should be particularly noted as one of the most striking of its class; in it Beethoven is still developing his ideas and not merely padding out.

Part III. on the second record is the Slow Movement (*andante con moto*), a tune with three variations (all repeats are observed), which affords some relief from the rhapsodic character of the First Movement.

Part IV., the Last Movement (*allegro ma non troppo*), really follows on without a break, and forms a splendid and strongly rhythmical finale, working up to a *Coda* containing a completely new idea (*presto*), after which the original tune appears and the Sonata ends in a triumphant outburst of pent-up feeling. The interpretation is excellent, though the final movement seems rather hurried. A complete analysis may be found in Stewart Macpherson's edition of this Sonata, published by Joseph Williams, 32, Great Portland Street, W. 1. Price 2/6.

STRING QUARTET (Beethoven) (Op. 18. No. 1). THE LYRIC STRING QUARTETTE (V.F. 571, 572, 573. 16/-).—In 1801 Beethoven's first six string quartets were published, though the order in which they were written is not known. This quartet in F Major is labelled No. 1, and is the most notable of the set. It is recorded in full except for the Slow Movement, in which there is a big cut of sixty bars towards the end. Everyone who buys these records should also purchase the score, irrespectively of whether he or she has any knowledge of notation; a quartet score is very easy to follow, and considerably increases enjoyment of the music.

Part I. and II.—The First Movement (*allegro con brio*) is a remarkable instance of Beethoven's power of developing what appears to be a quite ordinary idea—such an idea is the tune heard immediately in unison on all four strings; at once it begins to grow, and on top of the 'cello playing it the first violin sings a new little tune with a trill in it. The second tune proper arrives after some isolated notes on the first violin, and is all in two-note groups. The decorative passages that follow are in the manner of Mozart, as, indeed, is most of this First Movement. The small first phrase of the original tune now blossoms into quite a long melody heard on first and second violins just before the close of the first part. Part II., after a few bars of rapid notes, brings us to the recapitulation; that is the first and second tunes over again as originally heard, but towards the end a *Coda* is added (just after a unison passage moving upwards to a long-held note), and this gives us a delightful new version of the first tune and a dainty conclusion.

Part III.—This, the Second Movement, is marked *adagio affettuoso ed appassionato*, and is one of the most deeply-felt of all Beethoven's earlier slow movements. There is a pulsing accompaniment on the three lower strings over which the first violin plays the moving first tune. An irritating cut of thirteen bars omitting a beautiful piece of music is then made (the players seem to have edited Beethoven at this point). Then the music breaks up into long decorative passages, though never losing the feeling of the first idea. A further cut of sixty bars deprives us of some particularly lovely music; but, fortunately, preserves the "strangely touching closing phrase."

Part IV.—The fourth side is the *Scherzo* (repeats observed), *allegro molto*, which has a splendid forward urge; the 'cello should be closely listened to, for below the *Scherzo* tune it gives out another tune which Beethoven uses on the two violins to end the *Scherzo*; the two are perfectly combined.

The Trio (the name survives here as a relic of the days when a Trio was literally three instruments playing in an orchestral work as a relief from the rest of the band) has a characteristic octave leap heard all over the strings and a series of running passages. A return is made to the *Scherzo* to complete the threefold form.

Parts V. and VI.—This is a *Rondo* founded on a very brief and curt Beethovenish phrase. It is notable for the beauty of the episodes that come between the appearances of the first tune. The last part begins with a delightful rhythmic trick, a *sforzando* on a weak beat of the bar, which has the effect of momentarily upsetting one's balance; there succeed chattering violins in thirds, and the movement proceeds with great animation to the close. The whole movement is most interesting and repays careful study with the score, and it is full of Beethoven's great, if slightly coarse, sense of humour. The labelling of the records is very carelessly done, and gives quite a wrong impression of the movements played.

A DANCE RHAPSODY FOR ORCHESTRA (Frederick Delius). Sir H. J. WOOD and the NEW QUEEN'S HALL ORCHESTRA (Col. L.1505, 1506. 15/-).—One can imagine the Russian Ballet giving a beautiful interpretation of this work (the first of this composer's works to be recorded), so full is it of the spirit of the dance.

Part I.—The tune heard at the outset marked *Lento*, on the bass oboe, is the motto theme of the work; English horn and clarinet play little decorations round it. The following section ("with easy dance movement") gives us this tune on the oboe, but played quicker and in a different rhythm, and in a more extended form; there is a little rhythmic "tag" at the end of it on the flute which makes a frequent appearance; clarinets now play the tune and English horns the "tag," and after a string "tutti" and a brief appearance of the brass, we hear the tune on the violins and again on flute and oboe, which ends this part.

Part II.—This is marked *vivo*—a new and more energetic tune given out by bassoons and lower strings with a picturesque accompaniment on wood, brass, tambourine and cymbals; the tune appears in various guises, noticeably as an oboe solo with *pizzicato* strings and percussion accompaniment. Then, its energy spent, this tune gives way to a repetition of the original one to which the music is leading when this side ends. (A cut of eleven bars is here made.)

Part III.—The first tune is now heard fully stated on the violins strenuously accompanied—especially by a reiterated trumpet call: trumpets play the "tag" and (after a cut of twenty-one bars) the music quiets down, leading us by a way of a beautiful horn passage to a section marked *Molto adagio* for solo violin and violins, violas, and 'cellos, each divided into two parts. Here, just let yourself be borne along by the exquisitely transfigured first tune, which is now invested with all the ethereal beauty of which stringed instruments alone are capable; this is Delius at his best. Suddenly, while clarinet and bass oboe seem to be adding more beauty, our dreaming is rudely interrupted by a loud and boisterous "bring down the curtain" finale. This is a pity. The whole work is a joy, and the wood wind is particularly well recorded; more Delius please, *without* cuts.

Part IV., "Tambourin" (Fêtes d'Hebe), *Rumcau*.—Very familiar on records as a violin solo, played also on the harpsichord by Mrs. Gordon Woodhouse, and here presented in its orchestral dress. An attractive and absolutely straightforward little piece.

A LONDON SYMPHONY (Vaughan Williams). LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, conducted by Sir DAN GODFREY. (Col. L.1507,

1508. 15/-).—This work, first performed in 1914, has since been revised, and the first performance of the revised version took place in 1920 under Albert Coates. We are warned by Dr. Vaughan Williams "to judge the work as absolute and not as programme music, and any recognisable suggestions such as the *Westminster Chimes* or the *Lavender Boy* are to be considered as accidents, not essentials." It is very difficult to "appreciate" the first movement at all, so vilely is it cut about; the second and last movements are omitted, but the third—the *Scherzo*—is recorded in full. The recording generally is not up to standard, but the "lay-out" of the music may have something to say to this.

Part I.—Vaughan Williams looks at London and apparently at Westminster in the introductory section, which is suggestive of the famous chimes (partially heard on the harp), and their surroundings. The following *allegro risoluto* directed to be played "very heavily," possibly typifies by its resolute chromaticism the hard-hearted aspect of the great city; many little bits of tunes follow to which every listener will attribute a different significance in spite of the composer's dictum quoted above. There is a good deal of heavy work for trombones and tubas, and this first part ends in a distinct vein of rowdiness.

Part II.—The forbidding chromatic tune appears but soon gives way to a delightful and lyrical phrase on the English horn, followed by clarinet and a sweep up on two solo 'cellos and then two solo violins with harp arpeggios leading to a beautiful passage for divided strings (akin to the slow string section of the Delius

work above) and then a comment from bassoons and clarinets, followed by a kind of march tune. The music soon begins to glow more passionately, but the trombones bring us back to earth, and the movement ends in a gorgeous burst of noise.

Part III.—This, the Third Movement (*Scherzo*), Nocturne, is very straightforward; the main tune has a distinctly Gaelic and Cockney flavour. The whole of the first section of the music is repeated; look out at each ending for a charming trombone passage. The tune undergoes a certain amount of development, mainly on the strings, and there follows the exact reverse of what Delius does above; that is, a different rhythmic version of a portion of the *Scherzo* tune in a *slower* metre (a picture of heavy-footed Robert?); and this leads back to a fuller statement of it as heard before; and at the close of this part bassoons and 'cellos go muttering down to a low note.

Part IV.—Now we know where we are—concertinas and barrel organs—dancing in the Old Kent Road on Saturday night. But soon (after bassoons and clarinets have gone plumping down into the bass) a moment of great beauty comes which justifies the subtitle nocturne. Long-held chords on the strings transport us from the active scene, though the dance is faintly and yet more faintly heard, then sounds the horn, as always mysterious and romantic, and at the last the dance itself has become a thing of beauty.

May we hope for a complete recording of the Second and Fourth Movements, and a better balance of parts? A.A.R.

SUPPLEMENT

OMBRA LEGGIERA

The famous Shadow Song from the second act of Meyerbeer's "*Dinorah*," first produced at Paris in 1859. The mad shepherd girl, in a scene of moonlit birch-trees, sings to her own shadow. The Aria is especially connected with the memory of Patti's wonderful performance, but she never recorded it for the gramophone.

Caroline Hatchard (Voc. C.01098, 12in., red) (see p. 147)
Virginia Rea (Bruns. 25016, 12in., d.s.)
See p. 163)

Tetrazzini (H.M.V. 2-053207, 12in., red)

Galli-Curci (H.M.V. 2-053134, 12in., red)

Bronska (Col. A.5210, 12in., light blue)

Kline (Victor 55047, 12in., d.s.)

Florence Macbeth (Amer. Col. A.6219, 12in., d.s.)

Barrientos (Amer. Col. 49596, 12in.)

Galvany (Span. H.M.V. 053180, 12in., red)

Selma Kurz (Ger. H.M.V. 053179, 12in., red)
De-Hidalgo (Fono. B92.352, 27cm., d.s.)

Frieda Hempel (in German, Ger. H.M.V. B.24017, 12in.)

Ahimè! che notte oscura! fra le tenebre
errar
Alas! how dark the night is! I am afraid to
wander out

mi fa paura! Qual gioia! alfin non son
into the darkness! What joy! at last I am

più sola. Ecco l'amica, la fida compagna!
alone no longer. Here is my friend, my trusted
companion!

Buon dì! Venuta qui tu sei per imparare
Good day! Have you come here to learn

da me quel che cantare e che danzar tu dei
from me what you are to sing and dance

alle mie nozze con Hoel domani? A te, presto
at my marriage with Hoel to-morrow. Come
quickly

vieni a studiar le danze ed i canti,
and study the dances and songs,

vieni a imparare! . . .
come and learn them! . . .

Ombra leggiera, non te n' andar
Frail shadow, do not go from me.

Non t' involar, no, no, no.
Do not fly from me, no, no, no.

Fata o chimera,
Fairy or phantom,
Sei lusinghiera,
Thou art a flatterer

Non t' involar, no, no, no.
Fly not away, no, no, no.

Ombra a me cara,
O shadow dear to me,

Corriamo a gara—
Let us have a race together—

Resta con me, al mio piè!
Stay with me, at my feet!

Ah! non t' involar, non t' involar!
Ah! Fly not away, fly not away!

Ad ogni aurora ti vo' trovar!
Every morning I shall go seek thee!

Ah, resta ancora, vieni a danzar!
Ah, stay awhile, come and dance!

Se resterai, se non t' en vai,
If thou wilt stay, if thou wilt not go away,

M' udrai cantar!
Thou shalt hear me sing!

T' appressa a me, rispondi a me,
Come near to me, answer me,

Canta con me—ascolta. Ah! . . . a te!
Sing with me—listen. Ah! . . . thine!

Ah! . . . va ben! Ah! . . . a te! etc.
Ah! . . . that's right! Ah! . . . thine! etc.

Ombra leggiera non te n' andar,
Frail shadow, go not away,

Non t' involar, no, no, no.
Fly not away, no, no, no.

Fata o chimera, sei lusinghiera,
Fairy or phantom, thou art a flatterer

Non t' involar, no, no, no.
Fly not away, no, no, no.

Ombra sì cara, corriam a gara!
Shadow so dear, let us have a race together!

Resta con me, al mio piè.
Stay with me, at my feet.

Ah! non t' involar!
Ah! fly not away!

O PARADISO!

Recitativo and Aria from the fourth act of Meyerbeer's "*L'Africana*," first produced in French at Paris in 1865. Vasco da Gama, the great explorer, is entranced by his first sight of Africa.

Charles Hackett (Col. 7271, 12in., purple)
(see p. 147)

Mario Chamlee (Brunswick 5040, 12in., gold, d.s.) (see p. 147)

Caruso (H.M.V. 052157, 12in., red)

De' Muro (H.M.V. 052342, 12in., red)

Martinelli (H.M.V. 2-052168, 12in., red)

Evan Williams (H.M.V. 02238, 12in., red)

Gigli (Victor 74804, 12in., red)

Rosing (Voc. A-0169, 12in., pink)

Bonci (Col. D.17205, 12in., light blue, d.s.)
, (Fonotipia 74108, 12in., d.s.)

Constantino (Col. A.5109, 12in., light blue, d.s.)

Hipolito Lazaro (Col. 7177, 12in., purple)

Lenghi-Cellini (Parlo. P.306, 12in., d.s.)

Mario Gilion (Fonotipia 92241, 10in., d.s.)
Grassi (Fonotipia 92262, 10in., d.s.)
Longobardi (Fonotipia 92223, 10in., d.s.)
Vignas (Fonotipia 69121, 10in., d.s.)

RECITATIVO.

Mi batte il cor! Spettacol divin!
My heart beats! Heavenly vision!
Sognata terra, ecco ti premo alfin!
Land of my dreams, lo! I touch thee at last!

ARIA.

O paradiso dall' onde uscito,
O paradise rising from the waves,
Fiorente suol, splendido sol,
Flowering soil, radiant sun,
In voi rapito son.
By you I am enchanted.
Tu m' appartieni, O nuovo mondo,
Thou belongest to me, O new world.
Alla mia patria ti posso, ti posso offrir!
To my country I can, I can offer you!
Nostro è questo terreno fecondo,
Ours is this fruitful domain,
Che l' Europa può tutta arricchir!
That can enrich all Europe!
Spettacolo divin! In te rapito io son.
Heavenly vision! by thee I am enchanted.
O nuovo mondo, tu m' appartieni. . . .
O new world, thou belongest to me. . . .
Tu m' appartieni a me, a me, etc.
Thou belongest to me, to me, etc.

VECCHIA ZIMARRA

The song of "The Old Overcoat,"
from act four of Puccini's "*La Bohème*," first produced at Turin
in 1896.

Dinh Gilly (H.M.V. 7-52244, 10in., red)
Virgilio Lazzari (Voc. B.3040, 10in., pink)
Journet (H.M.V. 2-52516, 10in., red)
Martino (Col. D.5542, 10in., brown, d.s.)

Mardones (Col. A.846, 10in., light blue,
d.s.)
De Segurora (Col. A.1214, 10in., light blue,
d.s.)

Vecchia zimarra, senti;
Dear old coat, listen;
Io resto al pian,
I stay below,
Tu ascendere il sacro monte or devi!
You must climb the sacred mountain!

Le mie grazie ricevi.
Accept my thanks.
Mai non curvasti il logoro dorso
Never did your shabby back bow

Ai ricchi ed ai potenti.
To the rich and the powerful.
Passar nelle tue tasche,
But there passed into your pockets,

Come in antri tranquilli,
As into peaceful caverns,
Filosofe poeti.
Philosophers and poets.

Ora che i giorni lieti fuggir
Now that the happy days have fled
Ti dico addio, fedele amico mio—
I bid you farewell, my faithful friend—

Addio, addio!
Farewell, farewell!

(NOTE.—In line 3 the sacred mountain is, of
course, the *Mont de Piété*, or Sign of the
Three Balls.)

CHANSON INDOUE

The song of the Hindu merchant, an
eunuch, in Rimsky-Korsakoff's
"*Sadko*," first produced at Moscow
in 1897. Properly it should be sung
by a tenor with a very light voice,
but it has been adopted by many
lyrical tenors as well as by sopranos.
The French words are a free transla-
tion of the Russian, as a comparison
of them with the English translation
shows.

In French.
Olga Haley (Voc. D.02138, 12in., blue, d.s.)
(See p. 147)

Melba (H.M.V. 03759, 12in., red)
Alma Gluck (H.M.V. 7-33006, 10in., red)
Galli-Curci (H.M.V. 7-33059, 10in., red)
Rosa Ponselle (Amer. Col. 49920, 12in.)

In Russian.
Tatiana Makushina (V.F. 1083, 10in.,
green) (See p. 163)

Smirnóv (H.M.V. 2-022003, 12in., red)
Rosing (Voc. A.0189, 12in., pink)

Ne s'chest almazov v'kamennyh pes-cherah
Les diamants chez nous sont innombrables,
*It would be impossible to count all the diamonds
in the caves,*

Ne s'chest jemchuzin v'more poludionnom;
Les perles dans nos mers, incalculables;
*Impossible to count all the pearls in the warm
sea;*

Dalio-koi Indii chudess.
C'est L'Inde, terre des merveilles.
All the marvels of distant India.

L'est na tioplon more chudnyi kamen ishont
Dans un de nos sites un rubis émerge;
There is in the warm sea a marvellous jacinth;

Na tom kamne Fenix,
Un oiseau l'habite,
On this jewel sits a Phoenix,

Ptitsa s' likom devy!
Au visage de vierge!
The bird with a maiden's face!

Raiskia vsio pessi sladko rasspevalet.
Jour et nuit il chante d'une voix ravissante,
She is singing for ever sweet songs of Paradise,

Per'la rasspuskalet, more zajigalet.
Son brillant plumage couvre tout le rivage.
*And spreading her feathers she sets the sea on
fire.*

Kto tu ptitsa slyshit vsio pozabyvalet.
Qui pourrait l'entendre renaitrait des cendres.
*Whoever hears her song forgets everything for
ever.*

(Repeat first three lines.)

NOTES.

We are grateful to the dilatory newsagent who has just returned
a few copies of No. 2 to the office. They enable us to make up
fifteen sets of THE GRAMOPHONE for the benefit of any readers
who want them. By the way, we shall be obliged if anyone who
has difficulty in obtaining this number from newsagent or dealer
will let us know about it, with details.

It is proposed to start some sort of "exchange and mart"
column for the use of our readers in the February issue. Will
anyone who wishes to sell or exchange machines, records, sound-
boxes, etc., please write to 25, Newman Street, London, W. 1 for
particulars.

Owing to pressure of space the article on Piano Records by
M. Cernikoff is held over till next month.

We are asked to announce that the first general meeting of a
new Gramophone Society at Kingston-on-Thames will be held in
the Scotch Café, Kingston Bridge, at 8 p.m., on January 22nd.

It has been pointed out that some of the records especially
recommended by Dr. Francis Mead in his letter on American
Records in the December number, page 143 are already on sale
in this country. The Parlophone Company issues Schubert's
Unfinished Symphony in three double-sided records (Nos.
E 10052-4) for 13/6, and *Die Zauberflöte* Overture (No. E 10012)
for 4/6. No doubt more will follow from the same source.

'Gramophone Tips'
for 1924

MATTER QUADRUPLED

Written and published by

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READY NOW.

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USUAL TERMS TO TRADE

The Willesden magistrate on December 15th had to deal with
a case of assault in which a tenant, Mrs. Oake, alleged that the
landlord, Mr. Robinson, shook and threatened her because she
practised the *Moonlight Sonata*. Mr. Robinson, as reported in the
Daily Express, said that his wife was in a state of collapse because
of Mrs. Oake's "funereal music and aggressive voice practice."
He denied using his gramophone for "counter-battery" work.
To such base uses——!

REVIEW OF RECORDS

[NOTE.—The following are December issues not included in the Editor's Quarterly Review.]

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—E.305, 306, 307, 308, 309 (10in. d.s. 4s. 6d. each).—**The English Singers:** (i.) *Ave Verum Corpus* (William Byrd, ed. R. R. Terry) and *This Day Christ was Born* (William Byrd, ed. E. H. Fellowes); (ii.) *In Dulci Jubilo* (Pearsall) and *O little Town of Bethlehem* (Walford Davies); (iii.) *O come, all ye faithful* and *The First Nowell* from *Bethlehem* (Rutland Boughton); (iv.) *Wassail Song* (arr. R. Vaughan Williams), *The Noble Stem of Jesse* from *Prætorius* and *Good King Wenceslas* (arr. Walford Davies); (v.) *Earth to-day rejoices*, *The Holly and the Ivy*, in the ending of the *Year* and *There was a Star* from *Bethlehem* (Rutland Boughton).

These records make a very desirable set for the Christmas season. The most beautiful of them is the William Byrd, an aftermath from the Tercentenary harvest. *This day Christ was born* is rather confused when played with a loud needle, but with a soft-tone needle it is perfect. The carols, including those from *Bethlehem*, which is being sung at the Regent, King's Cross, are most refreshing and contain some exquisite effects of descant, though the pace at which some of them are taken sometimes tends to blur the subtleties, and would flabbergast our village choir. If forced to a choice of two I should choose E.305 and E.307, but I can strongly recommend all of them.

BRUNSWICK.—25016 (12in. 6s. 6d.).—**Virginia Rea** (Soprano): *Una voce poco fa* from *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Rossini); *Ombra leggiera* from *Dinorah* (Meyerbeer).

Miss Virginia Rea has a beautiful *coloratura* voice. It is a voice that inevitably suggests comparisons with that of Mme. Galli-Curci, by whom Miss Rea has apparently been happily influenced. I do not find her voice quite so appealing as that of the better known singer, but I prefer all the same the present record to that of Mme. Galli-Curci, since the latter suffers severely from blasts on some of the high notes, while the former is quite perfect as a piece of reproduction. The fact that it is double-sided is also a great advantage. *Ombra leggiera* is not one of my favourite arias, but it is one which all lovers of *coloratura* singing must have a record of. It shows certain aspects of the voice better perhaps than any aria.

VELVET FACE.—570 (12in. —).—**Makushina** (Soprano): *Ritorna vincitor* from *Aida* (Verdi); *Romanza santuzza* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni).

VELVET FACE.—(1083).—**Makushina** (Soprano): *Chanson Indoue* from *Sadko* (Rimsky-Korsakov); *On the Steppe* (Gretchaninoff).

Mme. Makushina is a Russian soprano who has recently become well known to London concert-goers. She is a very well trained and intelligent singer and her records are admirable. I look forward to more Russian songs from her and I hope she will give us less hackneyed ones than the *Chanson Indoue* which every soprano now thinks it incumbent on her to sing.

VELVET FACE.—566 (12in.).—**Royal Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by **Sir Dan Godfrey**: *Overture, Orphée aux Enfers* (Offenbach).

The Edison Bell Company have produced an excellent record of this delightful overture. I hope they will give us more Offenbach. I would like to suggest the *Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*, which was once available on a band record, but which has, I believe, been withdrawn.

BRUNSWICK.—15047 (10in. 5s. 6d.).—**Lauri Volpi**: *La donna è mobile* from *Rigoletto* (Verdi); *Questa o quella* from *Rigoletto* (Verdi).

All the Brunswick records are good and we cannot extend too hearty a welcome to them. Many as are the renderings of *La donna è mobile* and *Questa o quella* there are few, if any, better than this one, and the fact that both these favourite arias are on one record makes it certainly the most desirable of any.

EDISON.—(82187).—**Rachmaninoff** (Piano): *Prelude in C sharp minor* (Rachmaninoff); *Polka de W. R.* (Rachmaninoff).

Rachmaninoff's exquisite touch is well reproduced. The Edison discs show themselves particularly good on piano and violin records.

EDISON.—(82293).—**Prihoda** (Violin): *Andante* from *Symphonie Espagnole* (Lalo); (a) *Air* (Mattheson-Burmeister); (b) *Turkish March* from *The Ruins of Athens* (Beethoven).

EDISON.—(82284).—**Spalding** (Violin): *Schlummerlied* (Schumann); *Minuet in G* (Beethoven).

I have seldom heard a more convincing rendering of the tone of the violin than in the second of these two charming records. The Edison method of reproduction shows a real superiority here over other methods.

SCALA.—4008 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Culp** (Contralto): *On Wings of Song* (Mendelssohn); *Ave Maria* (Schubert).

This is one of the most agreeable contralto records I have heard. Mme. Culp has a glorious voice, and unlike most contraltos has no tendency to hoot. At 6s. 6d. for a double-sided record it is extremely cheap and can thoroughly be recommended.

EDISON.—82287.—**Muzio** (Soprano): *Spiagge amate* from *Eleana e Paride* (Gluck); *Mal d'amore* (Buzzi-Peccia).

An excellent record of Claudia Muzio's voice. There are not many records available of numbers from Gluck's operas, so this moving aria *Spiagge amate* deserves a welcome.

BRUNSWICK.—15003 (10in. 5s. 6d.).—**Max Rosen** (Violin): *Souvenir* (Drdla); *La Gitana* (Kreisler).

The violin is an instrument that usually reproduces well, but on the Brunswick records it is exceptionally good. It is, indeed, hard to imagine a more adequate record than the present one. Now, let the Brunswick Company give us a serious piece of violin music—on several records if need be.

BRUNSWICK.—50035 (12in., 8s.).—**Hofmann** (Piano): *Magic Fire Spell* from *Die Walküre* (Wagner); *Pastorale and Capriccio* (Sclaratti).

A first-class piano record. Hofmann's touch reproduces exceptionally well. The Sclaratti is particularly charming.

JAMES CASKETT.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.777—781 (12in. d.s., 6s. 6d. each) and E.304 (10in. d.s., 4s. 6d.).—From *The Messiah* (Handel): (i.) *Tudor Davies*, *Comfort ye, my people* and *Every Valley shall be exalted*; (ii.) *Choir*, *For unto us a child is born and Glory to God*; (iii.) *Choir*, *His yoke is easy and His burden is light* and *Surely He hath borne our griefs*; (iv.) *Choir*, *All we like sheep have gone astray and Lift up your heads, O ye Gates*; (v.) *Edna Thornton*, *O thou that tellest and Return, O God of Hosts* (the latter from Handel's *Samson*); (vi.) *Robert Radford*, *The people that walked and For behold darkness*.

The Albert Hall Orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald, gives a wonderful background to the soloists and to the well-balanced chorus (which, unless we are mistaken, contains a good many distinguished and familiar voices). If it were not for the accompaniment one might hesitate to discard the old Evan Williams records for Tudor Davies; but the orchestral ensemble is much better in the new records. The choruses are frankly a triumph, and would convert anyone to Handel; but there are enough oratorio and Handel enthusiasts already to ensure a wide welcome to this masterly achievement, and to encourage the Gramophone Company to continue, and where advisable to re-record, their *Messiah* numbers till they make a complete set.

VARIOUS RECORDS

The Ride of the Valkyries, (Aco. F.33048, 4s.), is a very fine record. It is played by the Albert Symphony Orchestra, and has only fourteen bars cut at the end. On the other side is the *Hungarian March* from Berlioz' *Faust*, surely one of the best marches ever written.

Handel's *Where'er you walk* is well sung by William Davidson, whose voice is uncommonly true and sympathetic (Aco F.33047 4s.). The only fault I have to find is that his final consonants are too explosive, and one began rather nervously waiting for them. On the other side is Frederick Collier singing *Isis and Osiris*, which begins with a long spoken recitative, difficult to make effective on the gramophone, but Mr. Collier succeeds, and his fine voice is supported by a male quartet. The song is from *The Magic Flute* of Mozart.

A magnificent piece of orchestral recording is the *Merry Wives of Windsor* done by the Opera House Orchestra, conducted by Edward Moerike (Parlophone, E.10051, 4s. 6d.). It is the best version of this delightful overture I have yet heard.

Other records commendable in their various ways are: His Master's Voice (C.1126, 4s. 6d.), Mayfair Orchestra: *Katinka* Selection; (C.1127, 4s. 6d.), Mayfair Orchestra: *Catherine* Selection; (C.1125, 4s. 6d.), Peter Dawson: *Six Australian Bush Songs*. Parlophone (E.10058, 4s. 6d.), Parlophone Orchestra: *Pique Dame* (Suppé); (E.10062, 4s. 6d.), Marek Weber's Orchestra: *Allah's Holiday* (*Katinka*), and *When Buddha smiles*. Vocalion (9380, 3s.), Charles Harrison: *There is no death; A winter song*, The Shannon Four. Zonophone (Serial G.O.60), Cecil Sherwood: *When the stars were brightly shining* (Puccini); *See the merry wine is winking* (Mascagni). (Serial G.O. 61), L'Incognita: *Lo! here the gentle lark and Sweet bird*.

DANCE MUSIC

On another page there is an article on Dancing, by Mr. Harry Melvill, so it is not necessary for me to give more than a selection of the best records for the month, and to welcome in passing the Blues version of *My sweetie*, as those of us who dance the Blues have been wanting that delightful tune for it, and a fox-trot, even when slowed down 25 per cent. is always a failure. The rhythm seems to lose its sharpness.

The two best fox-trots are the first on the following list, but the rest are not arranged in order of merit.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—B.1712 (3s.).—*Marcheta*, Great White Way Orchestra; New Hampshire, Zee Confrey and His Orchestra. B.1714 (3s.).—*If I can't have the sweetie I want and Last night on the back porch*, Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra.

VOCALION.—M.1176 (3s.).—*Sweet One*; a Japanese Sunset, First Avenue Orchestra. M.1179 (3s.).—*Bébé*; *Tweet, tweet*, Albert Shortt and his Tivoli Syncopaters.

ZONOPHONE.—Serial 2395 (2s. 6d.).—*Who did you fool after all; My sweetie went away*, Queen's Dance Orchestra. Serial 2399.—*Why worry Blues*; *The cat's whiskers*, Original Capitol Orchestra.

ACO.—G.15299 (2s. 6d.).—*Oh! Harold, One Step*; *Carolina Mammy*, The Whitehall Dance Orchestra. G.15301 (3s. 6d.).—*Bonnie*; *Dirty hands*; *Dirty face*; Cleveland Society Orchestra.

WINNER.—3923 (2s. 6d.).—*Dancing Honeymoon*; *I'll build a stairway to Paradise*, Hurlingham Club Orchestra. *Saw Mill River Road*; *My sweetie went away*, Diplomat Orchestra.

PATHE.—1725.—*Rizzi Mizzi*; *Louisville Lou*, Casino Dance Orchestra. 1723 (2s. 6d.).—*Barney google* and *My sweetie went away*, Casino Dance Orchestra.

SCALA.—660.—*You've got to see*; *Seven and eleven*, Broadway Band. 662.—*No, no Nora*; *Oh! Harold*, Wag Abbey's Orchestra.

PARLOPHONE.—E.5095.—*March of the Mannikins*; *Down among the sleepy hills of Tennessee*, Vincent Lopez and his Orchestra.

F. SHARP.

CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 25, Newman Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of a manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

SIBELIUS

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,— . . . The only thing that disappoints us is that, so far, you have not done anything towards getting any modern music produced. We are not troubling about Scriabine and Stravinsky (no doubt we shall soon be flooded with records of their music), nor composers of the Bliss-Goossens type, but composers such as Elgar, Delius, Debussy, Sibelius and Medtner. Surely these, though modern, are in reality more akin to the great classical composers than to the sensational and representational composers, to whom you so much object. We were rather surprised to hear of the unpleasant effect the *Valse Triste* has on you. It has always struck us as a harmless and enjoyable little piece, though of course (like *Finlandia*) nowhere near the level of Sibelius's best work. If it lived up to its programme it would be rather unpleasant, no doubt—but it does not! Anyhow, most of Sibelius's music is anything but morbid. Much of it is full of melancholy, but it is the healthy melancholy of certain aspects of nature, utterly different from the self-pity of Tchaikovsky (how disgusting that *Allegro non troppo* section of the first movement of the *Pathetic*, after the Introduction, is!). I am awfully anxious for some of Sibelius's music to be done on records. I suppose a symphony is too much to expect at present, but I do not see why we should not have one or two smaller works, such as the splendid *A Saga* and the exquisite *King Kristian II.* suite. The latter should be more popular even than the *Peer Gynt* and *Casse-Noisette* suites. His music should record very well, I think, since the scoring is so simple and clear. . . .

Yours truly,

Walmley.

A. C. RANKIN.

TIMPANI

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,— . . . Another point you mention is the lack of attention by the companies to the timpani. I have felt this for some time, but have lately purchased a Duophone. This instrument brings out the percussion in a remarkable manner, and seems (to me) to give a much fuller rendering of the bass strings. I shall be interested to learn your opinion of this particular instrument. . . .

Yours faithfully,

London, W. 2.

L. A. HOWELL.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—There appears to be a point where Mr. Landless (p. 144) goes wrong. It is hardly fair for him to compare the finale of the *Seventh Symphony* (Beethoven) with the finish of the same composer's *Fifth Symphony*. It follows that the latter has more volume for the reason that three trombones are added to the score for the last movement only, whereas in the *Seventh Symphony* there are no trombones. Two trumpets appear in both symphonies all through, but the trombones add considerably to the volume, both in actual performance and in the gramophone version. . . . There is one point I found out this last week: in the record of the *Sixth Movement* of the *Planets* (*Uranus*) (Holst) as issued by Columbia, wooden sticks were used to bring out the part (which is written for two players, and is very important). Although I believe wooden sticks are demanded in the score for *Jupiter* I don't think they are in *Uranus* and in the *Jupiter* record it appears that the ordinary sticks were used. I wonder how the aggressive five-four rhythm in *Mars* (No. 1) will sound as this number has been done and also *Mercury* (No. 3), and I believe *Neptune* (No. 7). These *Planets* records are really a great credit to Columbia. *Uranus* is extremely good.

Mr. Landless may expect to see Brahms' *Symphony No. 2* on H.M.V. soon, I think.

London, W. 2.

S. K. RUTHERFORD.

THE TWELVE BEST RECORDS

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have made this list on the basis of supposing that someone with identical tastes to myself were buying a gramophone for the first time and asking my advice as to the twelve best records to start with. My list would be: (1) Catterall Quartet—Beethoven *Minuet* and Haydn *Largo* (H.M.V.); (2) Lener Quartet—Mozart *Allegro* and Schubert *Andante* (Columbia); (3) Mrs. Gordon Woodhouse (Harpsichord)—Bach—*Movement from suite* and John Bull, piece for virginals (H.M.V. 10-inch); (4) *Figaro* and *Egmont Overtures* (H.M.V.); (5) *The Immortal Hour* (Columbia); (6) Bach *Second movement of Brandenburg Concerto* and *Air on G. String* (H.M.V.); (7) Westminster Cathedral Choir—Mozart *Motet, Ave Verum Corpus* and Elgar *Motet, Oh Salutaris Hostia* (H.M.V.); (8) English Singers—*Kyrie and Gloria* (for three voices) and *Sanctus* (for four voices), both by Byrd (H.M.V. 10-inch); (9) English Singers—*All Creatures, I've going to my naked bed*, and *Fair Phyllis I saw sitting all alone* (H.M.V. 10-inch); (10) *Love I pray take pity on me and Gone for Ever*, from *The Marriage of Figaro* (H.M.V.); (11) Moisevitch—Rameau *Gavotte and Variations* and Scarlatti—*Pastorale and Capriccio* (H.M.V.); (12) Gervase Elwes—*Clun*, from Vaughan William's *Wenlock Edge* (Columbia).

The guiding motive of this selection is economy. All except (12) have two sides of equal interest, and all except (10), (12) and possibly (5) and (11) can be heard any number of times without becoming stale and hackneyed. It is for this reason that I avoid solo voices and instruments; I learn to sing them in my bath, and then the charm is gone! The recording is not always perfect in this list: for instance (7) must never be played loud, or the basses swamp the other voices.

As the list shows, I belong to that class of gramophonists who attach no value to mere technical displays or virtuosity.

Yours faithfully,

Streatham. FRANCIS E. TERRY.

P.S.—I have not yet heard the *D'Aranyi-Fachiri Largo* from Bach's *Concerto in D minor* (Vocalion). If I had heard it, I should probably substitute it for No. (4) of the above list. Alternatively I would suggest the Hayward Purcell *Sonata* (H.M.V.). F. E. T.

THE CHEAPER RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—The makers of the cheaper records are surely missing a great opportunity of increasing their sales by failing to offer a higher type of music. Perhaps these good people will ask: "Who is this presuming to teach us our business?" Answer: "One of the host of gramophone users whose pocket is not up to his yearning for music."

Let us glance at a recent list abstracted at random from a pile on the table at the moment. It proves to be Imperial October list, and contains seventy-four double-sided records. Among these are a record of "Il Bacio" and "Columbine," three of hymns in Welsh, two of marches by a military band, and one of mouth-organ solos; total seven. The remaining sixty-seven are mostly comic (?) songs and fox-trots. There must be a public that wants something better! This is not the only offender. Far from it. Coliseum, whose old catalogue contains many beautiful records, offers fifteen numbers of the stereotyped sort, and has not added one item to its far too short list of celebrities and other 12-inch records for over a year. Regal list is almost as depressing, for in ninety-five numbers there are about a dozen that may be termed interesting music, either vocal or instrumental. Here, again, there have been no additions to the splendid 12-inch list for many months. Scala, whose old list is almost identical with Coliseum, offers in its latest score of numbers not a single one of good music. Winner is another example of frightfulness only relieved by "Zampa," which is classical enough for the most exacting, if age and frequency of recording be any criteria. Aco, Beltona and Zonophone may be excluded from this diatribe, for they do live the prevailing dullness to some extent. Zonophone, in a list of sixteen gives about 25 per cent. of real music, while Aco issues twenty records of which about 30 per cent. may be said to be worthy of place in the library of a discriminating collector. Beltona has eighteen out for November, and at least half can be called decent. Homochord is so modest that if any lists are printed they are kept most carefully concealed lest they should, by some mischance, get into the hands of the public.

What an indictment! But justifiable? We short-pursed lovers of music cannot possibly gratify our wish to have the music we want, because it costs so much; but if these makers, who have

been pilloried, could be brought to see eye to eye with us, there is sure to be big business attached to it. Said one to the present writer just recently, "I had no idea that you could buy such beautiful cheap records as those you have played. I thought they gave those awful fox-trots and comics." There is a rapidly increasing number of enthusiasts who want only good music and who cannot get it on the cheaper records, the makers of which do not realise that the jazz-hounds are but a part of the disc buying public. There are many excellent singers and musicians who are not in the front ranks of "celebrities," but who could, nevertheless, give us beautiful renderings of great music. This is not an appeal to all makers immediately to flood the market with "On with the Mottley" and Dvorak's "Humoreske." There are other pieces which would also please the public taste. It would not be to anyone's advantage if all the most popular items in the high-priced lists were the only ones selected for cheaper reproduction. Is it too much to ask those makers to take a little trouble to obtain from all sorts of sources information as to what may prove profitable? "Indian Love Lyrics" may be enjoyable, but constantly appearing in every list they become as burdensome as the "Smile of Molly Malone."

Yours faithfully,

Gorleston-on-Sea.

FRED GROVE-PALMER.

[Unless I am mistaken, we are on the eve of the change which our correspondent desires, and 1924 will see many records published as remarkable for their quality as their low price. An interesting Scala record of Russian Songs is mentioned elsewhere, and it must be reckoned to the credit of the same firm that its catalogue contains perhaps Tudor Davies' finest record, "On with the Mottley."—Ed.]

FIBRE NEEDLES

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I enclose P.O. 7/6 and shall be glad if you will send me THE GRAMOPHONE for twelve months. I have only just made its acquaintance through a friend who has lent me all the back numbers, and it is the gramophone paper of my dreams. I wish you every success with it. There is one particular in which I cannot quite follow you. I notice you constantly refer to the use of various steel needles and, honestly, I did not imagine that anyone who, like yourself, is critical of results still used them, but thought that they only persisted amongst those who love noisy band or fox-trot records. I have been at the game for about ten years, and since my first year have used fibre needles. To my mind they are not only more musical, but truer to the originals, apart from the manifest advantage that I have records which are much as when I bought them nine years ago. There is no getting away from the fact that steel needles ruin your records. Where you have two surfaces under friction the softest must wear away. I cannot imagine string quartets, for instance, giving decent string tone with steel needles, and the volume you get from fibre is quite sufficient for an ordinary room, especially if used fairly short. I have many records in a collection of 600 or so which are almost too powerful under such conditions. In testing sound-boxes or gramophones it seems to me scarcely fair to use a loud H.M.V. steel needle, for instance, with the No. 2 box, as the result with a tenor such as Fleta must in the nature of things be simply ear-splitting and destructive of all musical quality. In fact, I should have thought that the half-tone H.M.V. was the absolute limit to which anyone could go who regards records from a musical point of view apart from their noise. I am not prejudiced in the matter and have constantly tried to see if I could get better results with steel on certain records, but always go back to fibres with the conviction that the tone is far preferable and freer from the suggestion of what for want of a better name is called gramophone tone. Moreover, I have found that if you ask a friend who is musical, and without knowledge of the gramophone other than a superficial dislike, to listen quietly to a few choice records he will prefer fibre reproductions and often become a convert. It is scarcely too much to say that nothing has done more to maintain the prejudice against the gramophone which its early imperfections created than the use of steel needles, with their metallic bray and ear strain. However, I like your opinions and criticisms, and even when I happen not to agree with them, still I like them.

Yours truly,

Purley.

LIONEL GILMAN.

A VOICE FROM INDIA
(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE)

DEAR SIR,—As I have taken the gramophone seriously more or less for the past twenty years, from the time when I used to accompany vocal and violin solos on the piano to cover their defects, and during all that time till now have not known anyone who shared my little fad, except my wife, I have cordially welcomed the issue of THE GRAMOPHONE, which has a purpose to serve very specially in these *partibus infidelium* for good music—such as India, even Calcutta. Here our difficulties are peculiar. Only some of the leading makers have agencies—H.M.V. and Columbia chiefly—and their stock is limited by their customers' demands, so that anything else has to be ordered without first being heard, and orders for other makes, like the Vocalion and Fonotipia, have to be specially arranged for through friends at home. For sound-boxes, I do not think they are stocked at all except those that are standard for these two gramophones, so that any variety of these we should have to order on their repute.

Our gramophone is an old model H.M.V., what used to be called their Monarch Senior, with a wooden horn, and I use only the H.M.V. No. 2 sound-box; and—possibly owing to prejudice or insensibility—I am not yet convinced that there is anything better. You never mention horns in THE GRAMOPHONE. Is that because you regard them as obsolete? Of course the cabinet subdues the scrape; but does it not subdue the music in the same proportion? And can the quieter records—the chamber things which some of us prefer to anything else—afford that? For the same doubt I have been shy of the wooden needles. Even with a horn and an H.M.V. loud needle there are always parts of a string quartet that are hardly audible, especially the 'cello; and a gramophone user who is set on the music will, I think, rather put up with the scrape and try to train his ear out of hearing it than miss the music.

I have read your notes on sound-boxes in the September issue with interest, but with some bewilderment. Most of us cannot take the time to play about with half-a-dozen sound-boxes, and what I should like to know is the distinguishing qualities of two or three of the best for different purposes.

One good use of the gramophone you have as yet said nothing about, I mean the following of a record with the score—a plan which we find greatly to increase the interest of a record, especially orchestral and chamber things. We are getting together something of a library of miniature scores, in which it is easy—though distressing—to mark the cuts and follow continuously. I do not know whether there is more than the one miniature edition of the classics—a German edition, the name of which I do not have by me at the moment; and I wonder if you could not see your way to helping us by mention of the best available scores of records as you notice the records themselves—the publishers and number on their lists and price. It is sometimes most difficult to order a score from the record, except by writing out the first theme, with the present very casual way that makers have of describing their records. I believe H.M.V. has improved lately in that respect in their latest catalogues, which I have not yet seen; but I think all the makers have needed admonishment on the subject.

And cannot the makers be persuaded to put *all* their best records from all their lists on all their lists? Or are there difficulties about royalties?

I shall be glad if you will put my name on the list of your prospective members of your society for getting good records from the makers.

Yours truly,
(Rev.) JOHN D. SINCLAIR.

Calcutta.

I certainly do not regard horns as obsolete, and I agree with you that for the moment they are better than the cabinet. At the same time the gramophone companies have bewitched the public into thinking that the cabinets are better, and the users of the horn are now exceptions. The great merit of my Orchestraphone is that it is really a large horn enclosed in a cabinet large enough. The best sound-box for bringing out the bass on an H.M.V. machine that I know is the Sonat (Algraphone Company). I have not had any experience of the Astra with an external horn, but it is magnificent on my Orchestraphone with a loud needle. As long as you do not mind a scratch, the best loud needles are the Trumpeter (Chappell & Co.) and the Cleopatra (Gramophone Exchange). Goodwin & Tabb publish those German scores in English. As soon as possible we shall adopt your excellent suggestion of publishing the number of the miniature score with the reviews.—Ed.]

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—As a journalist and a gramophone lover may I warmly congratulate you upon THE GRAMOPHONE, the first copy of which I have seen to-day? Thank Heaven for a real gramophone paper at last. Sincere and well-informed criticism is valuable to both the recording companies and the record purchaser.

I was delighted to notice your favourable remarks as to the singing of Mr. Browning Mummery in *Pagliacci* and *Bohème*. I first heard the records on the new Columbia Grafanola, and was rather disappointed, but when I tried them on my own machine, a Vocalion, the improvement was immense, and the record seemed entirely different. I am not suggesting that the Vocalion is superior to the Grafanola in every respect, but for certain types of voices the reproduction is very faithful indeed.

Yours sincerely,

HARRY WOODHAM.

Sheffield.

[It is an astonishing fact, constantly brought to my notice, that the more educated a correspondent is the more likely he or she is to spell gramophone with two a's.—Ed.]

TEST YOUR FRIENDS WITH THIS

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Any gramophone owner can apply some very amusing tests to himself and friends in the following way:

Select for first trial a discarded old disc for experiment. Cut about $\frac{1}{16}$ in. from *one side* of the centre hole; there is no need for exactness, but be sure to leave *one side* of the hole uncut. You can now make the record "run true," or behave like a shocking "swinger," at will. Select a piece of music with a few long notes for preference, as being more effective than short, choppy notes.

First enjoy the fun in solitude. Then try it on your friends, singly or otherwise, and *if you can keep your face straight* you can test your friends individually on various points, for instance:

Can they perceive anything wrong; in other words, have they any "ear" for music?

Are they sincere?

Or will they pretend to enjoy your record in order to please you?

Having applied your tests, you can sit down and write a book on human nature.

Yours faithfully,

T. W. WOODHOUSE.

SELECTION OF ORCHESTRAL, INSTRUMENTAL AND VOCAL RECORDS

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I am not a musician, but a lover of good music, and find with the aid of a gramophone that I can gratify my taste.

For the past two years I have been an enthusiast and have spent much time selecting records. Had your excellent magazine been in existence sooner, I should have been saved a lot of trouble; your expert criticism of the monthly records and quarterly reports would have helped me considerably, and I sincerely hope you will continue to give your unbiased opinion, without fear or favour. Well, I trust I have, unaided, educated myself up to your standard, and I propose, if you approve, to pass on the experience I have gained for the benefit of your readers. I append herewith a select list of my favourite records, and for the convenience of reference have divided my choice into three sections, viz.: orchestral, instrumental and vocal.

ORCHESTRAL RECORDS.—Beethoven's *C Minor Symphony*—Fifth Symphony (H.M.V. D.665, 6, 7, and 8); *Concerto No. 5*—Emperor Concerto (H.M.V. D.625, 6, 7, 8, and 9); (Frederick Lamond with Orchestra); *Coriolan Overture* (H.M.V. D.690). Wagner's *Meistersinger* (*Dance of the Apprentices*) (H.M.V. D.138); *Entry of the Gods* (H.M.V. 503). Dvorak's *Symphony No. 5 in E Minor*, Op. 95 (From the "New World") (H.M.V. D.536, 7, 8, and 9). César Franck's *Variations Symphoniques*, De Greef and Rattorch (H.M.V. D. 697 and D.698); *Hungarian Fantasia* (Liszt) (H.M.V. D.523 and D.524). Debussy's *L'Après-midi d'un faune* (H.M.V. D.133). Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* (H.M.V. D.164). Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Nocturne) (H.M.V. D.152). These are all recorded by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra.

INSTRUMENTAL RECORDS.—String records are exceptionally good on the gramophone and give me the greatest enjoyment; my favourite violin solos, etc., are as follows: Elman: *Cavatina* (Raff) (H.M.V. 07994) and *Orientale* (César Cui) (4-7920). Heifetz:

Concerto in A Minor (Goldmark) (H.M.V. 3-07968) and *Romance* from *Concerto in D Minor* (Wieniawski) (H.M.V. 2-07912); the latter is a very fine record. Sammons: *Meditation* (Massenet) (Voc. D.02040). Kreisler: *Indian Lament* (Dvorak) (H.M.V. 2-07912). Kreisler and Zimbalist—*Concerto in D Minor*, for two violins with string quartet (Bach) (H.M.V. 2-07920, 2-07918, and 2-07922); the best records obtainable. Catterall and Hamilton Harty: *Sonata in A* (Mozart) (Violin and Piano) (Col. L.1494, 5, and 6). Catterall, Squire and Murdoch: *Trio No. 1 in D Minor* (Mendelssohn) (Col. L.1486). Flonzaley Quartet, a brilliant combination: *Cansonetta* (Mendelssohn) (H.M.V. 8232), and *Nocturne* (Borodin) (H.M.V. 08118); exceptionally good. Lener Quartet of Budapest have only given us two records, both admirable, hope others will follow: *Andante con moto*, from *Quartet in D Minor* (Schubert), and *Molto Allegro*, from *Quartet in G Minor* (Mozart) (Col. L.1460). Also *Lento*, from *Quartet in F Major* (Nigger Quartet) (Dvorak), and *Andante Cantabile* (Serenade) (Haydn) (Col. L.1465). London String Quartet—*Quartet Op. 64, No. 3* (Haydn) (Voc. D.02020). Elman String Quartet—*Quartet in G Major* (Dittersdorf) (H.M.V. 08056). A few more concertos with string quartet would I feel sure be appreciated, also solos with string quartet. Lionel Tertis: *Viola Prelude and Allegro* (Pugnani and Kreisler) (Voc. D.02041). I cannot say I altogether like the Viola for solos, but Lionel Tertis is such a fine exponent of the instrument, I feel I must include one example of his wonderful playing.

VOLONCELLO.—W. H. Squire: *Ave Maria* (Gounod) (H.M.V. D.349); *Melodie* (Gluck) (Col. L.1477). Pablo Casals: *Concerto in A Minor* (Goltermann) (Col. 7151).

VOCAL RECORDS.—I find it very difficult to select songs: some voices suit the gramophone, others do not; so far as my experience goes, the following can be recommended. I head my list with my favourite soprano, Alma Gluck. She has a lovely voice, sings with exquisite taste, and you feel that she loves the songs she sings. Alma Gluck: Solos—*L'heure exquise* (H.M.V. 7-33025), also *Rossignole* (2-033034), *Aller au bois* (2-33008), and many others; should like them all. Gluck and Homer: *Crucifix* (H.M.V. 2-034025), very fine; also *Whispering Hope* (2-4267), *Der Kleine Sandmann* ("Hänsel and Gretel") (7-44010), and others. Gluck and Zimbalist: *Le Nil* (H.M.V. 2-033038), *Romance Orientale* (7-33027); wish we could have more of these. Frances Alda: *Tes Yeux* (H.M.V. 7-33014). Geraldine Farrar: *Connais tu le pays* (H.M.V. 2-033054). Zoia Rosovsky: *Ave Maria*, "Otello" (Verdi) (Voc. A.0106). Julia Culp: *Nuit d'Etoiles* (H.M.V. 7-33019). Marie Louise Edvina: *Depuis le jour* (H.M.V. 2-033025). Galli-Curci: *Uno voce poco fa* (H.M.V. 2-053114), the finest example of coloratura singing. Frieda Hempel: *Wohin* (H.M.V. 43043). Elena Gerhardt: *Der Nussbaum* (Col. C.01092). Caruso: *Elegie* (H.M.V. 2-032010), and *Si vous l'aviez compris* (2-032018). Caruso and Ancona: *Del tempo al limiar* (H.M.V. 054134); very good. Smirnov: *O dolce incanto* (H.M.V. 2-052192). Martinelli: *O Paradiso* (H.M.V. 2-052168). De Gogorza: *Vision fugitive* (H.M.V. 032120). Journet: *King's song* (H.M.V. 3-42550). I wish you could let me have the words of this song. McCormack seems to be a great favourite, I can't say I like his broad pronunciation. Is it due to his Irish or American accent? He has a beautiful voice and sings with perfect taste. His rendering of *She is far from the land* (H.M.V. 03234) is very sympathetic. I should be sorry to be without any of the records included in the above lists; of course it is impossible to suit all tastes. I sincerely hope some of your readers will appreciate my efforts, and, if so, I shall be satisfied.

Burton-Joyce, Notts.

THE FAURÉ QUARTET

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,— . . . In your November issue the H.M.V. records of Fauré's *Quartet in C minor* are reviewed without any mention of the fact that, as only a single "side" is allowed to each movement, these must be so mutilated as to lose all form. (I write this without having heard the records, from knowledge of the length of the work in question.) This is a great pity, as we are not likely to get another version of this work, which would have made a valuable addition to the library.

In this connection I see a correspondent asking if various Columbia and other records have been "cut." The Mozart *G minor Quintet* has been cut badly, as is unfortunately the case with nearly all chamber-music records, even with those now being produced. Brahms's Quartets and the like are perfectly

useless to those who want them, if every movement is reduced to three or four minutes. Some of the pressure that has at last induced the issuing houses to produce orchestral music in more or less complete form might well be directed now towards chamber music. But this is only possible if papers such as yours will emphatically condemn in each instance the makeshift compromises, of which purchasers have in general no warning, either from the makers or from reviewers.

Yours faithfully,

F. C. SCHUSTER.

Bearsted.

AN ANSWER

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—In answer to M. E. H. (November, p. 119), for good clear French it is hard to beat Kirkby Lunn's *Printemps qui commence* (H.M.V. 2-033031) and *Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix* (H.M.V. 2-033033) and Journet's *Lakmé* (H.M.V. 032021). It is to be remembered that French is an exceedingly difficult language to sing in, and some of the liberties necessarily taken with the language are very puzzling to foreigners. . . .

Yours, etc.,

F. T. G.

London, W. I.

"A Caruso Admirer" also writes in answer to M. E. H., suggesting H.M.V. 2-032018 *Si vous l'aviez compris*, H.M.V. 2-032010 *Elégie*, and H.M.V. 2-032005 *Ah! fuyez, donce image* (Manon).—Ed.]

A LEADING QUESTION

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Which, in your opinion, is the finest record made by each of the following artists, whether a solo or a concerted number: Tetrzzini, Austral, Chaliapin, Hempel, Kirkby Lunn? I wish to find out which record made by each of the artists is their masterpiece of the recording theatre.

Yours faithfully,

ERIC JOHNS.

Neath.

[It is impossible to answer a question like this. To begin with, Tetrzzini is not a favourite soprano of mine, and I have comparatively few of her records in consequence, but of those which I have I like best *Batti, Batti* from "Don Giovanni." I like Austral in Wagner but in nothing else. Any of the magnificent Wagner records of the H.M.V. will show her off at her best. Practically all the Chaliapin records are perfect. If you want him at his most dramatic get the two records of the *Death of Boris*, if you want to hear him sing beautifully an old-fashioned and melodious aria get *Vi ravviso*, from "La Sonnambula." All the Hempel records are good; one of the loveliest is the *Cavatina* from "Ernani" (*Surtia à la notte*). I should not like to say which is Madame Kirkby Lunn's best record, but perhaps some other correspondent could tell you.—Ed.]

THE B.R.O.S. SOUND BOX

(To the Editor of, THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—The contributor of the letter signed "H. F. V. L." in the December issue of your Journal was certainly far from kind to us poor manufacturers, in his criticism of our wares. Leaving the makers of the other excellent sound-boxes he named to defend themselves . . . we should very much like "H. F. V. L." to offer some explanation for describing this B.R.O.S. as "a complete washout on almost anything"; firstly because I have no record of ever having supplied him with a B.R.O.S. for trial, secondly, to find out when and where he heard this box, in order to reclaim same if it is really as bad as he makes out it is. Further it would be interesting for readers of "The Gramophone" to know how the "Exhibition" sound-box can be adjusted "so that it is to the eye unchanged but will reproduce the bass as well as it can be done with a larger box, and reproduce vocal records with fibre needles with natural brilliancy of tone." . . .

Yours faithfully,

R. A. RICE,

pp. A. J. RICE.

133, London Road,
Brighton.

Gramophone Societies' Reports

THE old cynic from the Mersey has not had it all his own way, because I have received a number of letters from secretaries of Societies saying in the most sympathetic way that if we can find room for some of their reports or for condensed reports or for just a list of the officers and H.Q. of Gramophone Societies, they are sure that such a course would encourage their members and perhaps help the paper as well; but that if we can't find room, well and good—they quite understand the difficulties. One of them goes further. "I certainly consider that your space is far too valuable to be encumbered by a mass of Society detail only of interest to a very small minority; and if, as I fear, the continuance of the printing of the same will mean any diminution of other matter, then I for one ask you to refrain from printing them in future issues." So I am encouraged by these manifestations of goodwill to deal as best I can with the material which has accumulated in the G.S. file by the 15th of each month; and all that I would ask Recording Secretaries to do is to condense their reports if written specially for THE GRAMOPHONE, or if they send copies of their typewritten reports, not to complain if I blue-pencil them severely.

This month I beg to draw special attention to the formation of a new Gramophone Society at York (which I regret to notice spells gramophone with two a's instead of two o's!); and also to the evidently interesting lecture on *The Ring* given to the Bristol G.S. by Mr. H. Todd.

THE WEST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At the December meeting the demonstrations were given by Mr. Kay and Mr. Edwards. It is sufficient to say that during both demonstrations members were observed noting records for Christmas purchase. Mr. Kay used a Voltona sound-box for his demonstration and Mr. Edwards a particularly fine "Extra Sonore" box. Records deserving special mention were as follows: *No, Pagliacci non Son* and *Vesta la giubbia*, Ulysses Lappas (Col.); *The Trumpet shall Sound* and *The People that walked in darkness*, Norman Allin (Col.); *Adamastor re delle acque profonde*, one of Ruffo's finest efforts (H.M.V.); *Wohin*, Frieda Hempel (H.M.V.); *Dance of the Tumblers and Russian and Ludmila* (H.M.V.), and the much-discussed *Ay, Ay, Ay*, by Michele Fleta (H.M.V.). Mention must also be made of three humorous items that figured in the demonstrations, *Future Mrs. Awkins*, a memory of the late Albert Chevalier; the ever-popular *Penny Showman*, by Bransby Williams; and a scream, *Tennessee*, by Harry Weldon. The evening was brought to a close with the quartet, *Bella figlia dell'amore*, by Caruso, Galli-Curci, Perini and De Luca.

BRISTOL GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—On Tuesday, November 20th, Mr. H. Todd gave a lecture to the Bristol Gramophone Society on Wagner's music-drama, *The Ring*. At the outset the lecturer explained that, owing to the many-sided character of the subject, it would be impossible to deal satisfactorily with it from more than one very restricted point of view, and so he proposed to consider it almost entirely with reference to its musical structure. Mr. Todd, after sketching in rapid outline the main story of the drama, then dealt with the general plan of its music and explained the origin and significance of the "Leit-motiv"; some of these, including the "Spear," the "Sword," and "Fire" were closely examined and the fitness for their purpose was shown. The lecturer then showed the various ways that these motives were used, in particular how in some cases the pure rhythm of the motive beaten out by the drum gave an impression of the full theme underlying the thoughts of the character in the drama: this was illustrated by the use of the "Hunding" motive in the first act of *Valkyrie*. Further it was shown how related subjects had motives that were closely connected musically, and in some cases one motive would be plainly developed from another, as exemplified by the themes appropriate to the "Boy" and the "Man" *Siegfried*. The lecturer then went on to explain that the music was essentially Romantic rather than Classic, and that in fact in some parts it became pure Nature music, as in the *Forest Murmurs* from *Siegfried*. During the second half of the evening Mr. Todd demonstrated, with explanations, various records which served to illustrate his previous remarks; these also were pointed by examples on the piano. The best records demonstrated were *The Prelude to Valkyrie* (H.M.V.), *The Sword Song* (Edison Recreation), *Wotan's Farewell* and *The Fire Music* (Parlophone), *Siegfried's Funeral March* (H.M.V.).

CITY OF YORK GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—I have to announce the forming of a Gramophone Society in York. About a month ago six enthusiasts conferred together and decided that a Society would do much to encourage the cultivation of good musical taste in our ancient city, and that a Society was essential to all who are interested in recorded music. As yet we have not got permanent headquarters, but hope to have by the date of our next report. The first public meeting was held on November 15th, when a musical programme was provided by the originator of the scheme, Mr. H. A. Knowles. Mr. Hainsworth of the Leeds P. and G.S. came over and gave us an address on the aims and objects of a Gramophone Society, to an audience which just fell short of fifty. All thanks are due to him for his generosity in supporting us so ably, and I feel sure we here at York fully appreciate his kindness. The meeting was a great success, so successful that another was arranged for November 29th. On this occasion seventy people were present, to whom Mr. Cyril Turner, a gramophone agent in the city, gave a demonstration of the new Columbia Grafonola, with Columbia records. I might mention here that the chief traders in the city have agreed to support us by the loan of gramophones and records. At this meeting the committee and officers for the current season were elected, and to judge by the enthusiasm displayed our Society will be a great success. The programmes submitted on both occasions were of a high standard, and Mr. Knowles must be congratulated on possessing such fine records. His programme comprised the following: *Barcarolle* (*Tales of Hoffmann*—Offenbach), Peerless Orchestra; *In questa tomba oscura* (Beethoven), Chaliapin; *Abide with me* (Liddle), Dame Clara Butt; Schubert's *Ave Maria*, Heifetz; *Angels Guard Thee* (Godard), McCormack; Liszt's *10th Hungarian Rhapsody*, Laderevski; *Largo al Factotum* (*The Barber of Seville*—Rossini), Peter Dawson, bass-baritone; *Salanella* (Balfe), Coldstream Guards; *Ombra mai fu* (*Serse*—Handel), Caruso, tenor; *Prologue from Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo), Peter Dawson; *Humoreske* (Dvorak), Kreisler; *Lo! hear the gentle lark* (Bishop), Galli-Curci; *Parted* (Tosti), Sydney Coltham; *O quanti occhi fisi* (*Madame Butterfly*—Puccini), Martinelli and Frances Alda. Mr. Turner gave an excellent recital of his Columbia records, and Stracciari's rendering of *Largo al Factotum* stood out as the best item of the evening. The secretary is Mr. G. Loadman, of 40, Balmoral Terrace, York, who will be pleased to supply any information regarding our objects to interested inquirers.—C. S. K. LEONARD, *Recording Secretary*.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—Till the meeting held on November 28th the writer had not heard the New Columbia Grafonola under very satisfactory conditions, but on this evening a period of patient waiting was amply repaid when Mr. Cyril Davis presented a very happily chosen programme of New Process Columbia records, perfectly rendered on a Table Model instrument. His judicious and informative remarks and his artistic perception contributed materially to make his evening an outstanding success. Of the New Columbia one can only speak in terms of high praise. For tonal quality, excellence of material and workmanship and value it stands unequalled. To Mr. Davis the Society is also indebted for a supply of fine souvenir programmes. For an initial venture Mr. Scott's meeting, held on December 5th, was an achievement to be proud of, and he must feel gratified with the reception accorded to his excellent programme. He worthily sustained the high standard attained at recent meetings. The *Lento* from Dvorak's *Nigger Quartet*, by the Lener String Quartet, instinct with melodious melancholy; the strongly contrasted *Seguidillas Gitanas* (Arbos), by Catterall, Squire & Murdoch, with its captivating lilt; and the *Rosamunde* selection, by Kreisler, were outstanding items in a fine selection.—J. W. HARWOOD, *Recording Secretary*.

The reputations of many of the great singers of the world rest largely on their performances in opera. If we find them predominate in person on the concert platform, operatic items predominate in the programme. Much of the world's most beautiful music, however, is to be found outside the realm of opera, and so, with the idea of giving the members of the SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY a whole evening

with some of this lovely music, and at the same time showing them what some of the great vocalists could do with that music, a programme of more or less classic songs was arranged for December 10th at headquarters. Chaliapin provided two star items in *The Two Grenadiers* and Moussorgsky's *Song of the Flea*. His interpretation of both was really great—in the latter his sardonic laughter was a noteworthy feature. Emilio de Gogorza was exceptionally fine in several items and is one of the finest baritones yet recorded. His rendering of *O Song Divine* was especially pleasing. In duets, Caruso is apt to over-shadow his partner, but he does not do so much with Gogorza in *A la luz de la luna*, which is a most melodious item. Fleta demonstrated wonderful vocal colour and voice control in *Ay, Ay, Ay*. This is a record for the connoisseur. It is not possible in a limited space to deal with all the items and vocalists in the programme and it must suffice to say that those whom we heard, namely, Tetrizzini, Destinn, Schumann-Heinck, Hempel, Dinh Gilly, Stracciari, McCormack and Norman Allin, all fulfilled the expectations raised by their operatic reputations. This concert brought our 1923 programmes to an end, and following our annual general meeting, which will be held during the course of the next week or two, we shall embark upon the new year with renewed vigour. The Society is purchasing one of the new Columbia machines and this will, doubtless, provide us with many a musical feast. Our syllabus for 1924 is now ready and a copy will gladly be sent on application to the undersigned at 42, Chalsey Road, Brockley (stamp please). January 14th is a date that should be particularly noted, as Mr. Yeomans, Principal of the Educational Department of the Gramophone Co., and an esteemed patron of our society, will give us a lecture-demonstration on Handel-Bach. This is an open evening and all music-lovers are invited to the Central Hall (Minor), High Street, Peckham. Commence at 8 p.m. sharp.

ERNEST BAKER.

EDINBURGH GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—On November 16th, the programme was sustained by the lady members. A very varied selection proved that the ladies' tastes can rise above a new hat when they become gramophonists. It was unfortunate that the society sound-box should have been out of adjustment, and therefore some of the records did not get the reproduction they deserved. Included in the programme were the following:—*O Sole Mio*, Caruso; *Old Black Joe*, Homer; a Rachmaninoff *Prelude*; *Cotton Field's Medley*—a good Scala; *Passacaglia*, Sammons and Tertis; *Mountain Gnomes*, Coldstreams; and *The Gay Highway*, Peter Dawson's contribution to the November H.M.V. Supplement. This record is notable for its smooth surface.—H. L. M. MORTON, *Hon. Secretary*, 55, Trinity Road, Edinburgh.

RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—A special programme by two members of the society, Messrs. C. Sully and C. Packham, was heard on November 19th. The items included *Ich Liebe Dich* (H.M.V.), Gervase Elwes; *On Wings of Song* (Scala), Gulp; *Unfinished Symphony* (First and Second Movement, Pt. 1) (Parlophone) Parlophone Orchestra; *Serenade* (H.M.V.), A. De Greef; *Solveig's Song* (H.M.V.), Galli-Curci; *Andante* (Col.), Lener Quartet; *Pagliacci Selection* (Col.), N.Q.H.L. Orchestra; *O Lovely Night* (Col.), Elsa Stralia; *Concerto* (H.M.V.), Heifetz; *Merry Wives of Windsor* (H.M.V.), R.A.H. Orchestra. Fibre needles were used exclusively and several sound boxes were demonstrated, including the B.R.O.S., which received very favourable comment.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The November meeting of this society was held in the Onward Hall, Deansgate, on Friday the 9th inst., when in the unavoidable absence of Mr. Rastall, the chair was taken by Mr. Gee. It was most unfortunate that the attendance was so meagre, due, no doubt, to the exceptionally heavy rain, but there was, however, compensation in the spirit of appreciation exhibited in the reception of the programme submitted by Mr. Brennand, the recently appointed hon. secretary, which was rendered the more interesting by his short commentary prefacing each selection, enabling the listener to acquire knowledge, of minor detail, but of supreme importance to the seeker after faithful reproduction of great works. Amid the 22 items rendered and mostly well received, the "Gems" were, as usual, discovered in the music of elevation, and inspiration. They are contained in the under-noted and are worthy of any collection:—Violin, *Ave Maria* (Schubert), Mischa Elman (H.M.V.); orchestral, *La Tosca* (New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra) (Col.); orchestral, *Le Jardin féérique* (The Fairy Garden), Symphony Orchestra; vocal trio, *Troncar suoi quell'empio* (*William Tell*), Martinelli,

De Luca and Mardones (H.M.V.); contralto, *Dreams of Song* (Mendelssohn), Julia Culp (Coliseum); soprano, *Queen of the Night* (*Magic Flute*), Selma Kurz (H.M.V.); soprano, *Sovra il sen la man mi posa* (*Sonnambula*), Galli-Curci (H.M.V.); a comparison of vocal tone with differing method of production, both beautiful, the first preferable. Tenor, *Siegmund Greets the Spring Night* (*The Valkyrie*), Tudor Davies; orchestral, *Rhine Maidens' Scene* (*Twilight of the Gods*), Symphony Orchestra. For their educative value, in inspiring the mere melody lover to take a deeper interest as to the object of the composer in compiling such moving, and enchantingly beautiful strains. An evening of great musical interest and charm.—STANLEY E. HARPER, *Recording Secretary*.

CONCERTS

ALBERT SAMMONS AND WILLIAM MURDOCH.

It is satisfactory to know that the three sonata recitals given by Mr. Sammons and Mr. Murdoch have been so successful that they are giving two more in January.

Very few violin and piano duets have so far been recorded, and of these three programmes I think only the César Franck. These two artists should certainly be persuaded to give us some of the lovely things they have played for our gramophone libraries. Each concert has shown them growing in grace, and such a perfect uniformity in interpretation have they now achieved that it would be a thousand pities for their performance to be heard only by the comparatively small but immensely enthusiastic audience that fills the Wigmore Hall at their recitals. They did one of Brahms' three sonatas at each recital, and the most romantic of the two Schumanns (D minor), a glorious Bach in E major, and on the modern side, Elgar, Delius, Debussy and Goossens. The last is a particularly fascinating work, of a fresh and lyrical beauty.

THE SPENCER DYKE QUARTET.

Nov. 21st.

The Spencer Dyke Quartet opened their programme at this concert with Beethoven's great *Opus 131 in C sharp minor*. It is one of the longest of his quartets, and of unconventional construction. The movements merge into one another, and the No. 3, *allegro moderato*, consists of eleven bars only, while the *andante cantabile* takes about 200. It would be difficult to record this glorious work for that reason, but I think the final *presto* movement could be done and should be done. The rest of the programme was very light fare. The J. B. McEwen arrangements would record well, and the final Haydn *Op. 76, No. 4 in B flat* has not been done yet. I believe the Spencer Dyke Quartet are not yet to be found on any gramophone list, but I hope before long that their fine playing may be made accessible to every lover of music.

EXTRACTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

BERNARD FLYNN (Birmingham).—"I wonder if any of your readers has a song called *Pennies*. It was issued on an old single-sided Zonophone record about ten years ago, and I shall be glad if you can help me to acquire this record."

J. HESSELL (The Strand House, Rye, Sussex) asks for the words of the following H.M.V. records:—*Echo Song* (Galli-Curci), *Angels' Serenade* (Alma Gluck), *Room for the Factotum* (Peter Dawson), *Many a Dusty Mile* (Gresham Singers), *Cutting Rushes* (Rosina Buckman), and *Antonia's Song* (D'Argol); and the *Snowdrops Duet* (Vocalion D. 02102), sung by Titterton and Destournel. All these are of course sung in English. (*Vide* letter signed E.G.L. on p. 142, of December number.)

"SUSSEX" writes strongly recommending Voc. D 02111, "the lovely *Bagatellen* of Dvorak, perfect music perfectly recorded." (Reviewed December, p. 139.)

"CROINDENE."—Will he please send name and address?—Is anxious to hear of other enthusiasts in Croydon who would help him to start a Gramophone Society with a library, such as that outlined in our December number in the report of the Canterbury G.S.

S. K. RUTHERFORD (London, W. 2) points out that of the "cinema music" mentioned by "Amateur" in the December number (p. 143), two pieces are already available on records:—Vocalion, Tchaikovsky's *Valse* from the *Sleeping Beauty* suite, played by the Regent Symphony Orchestra; and H.M.V. D. 155 (d.s.) or Col. L. 1427 (d.s.) *Judex* from *Mors et Vita* (Gounod), played by New Queen's Hall Orchestra and Royal Albert Hall Orchestra respectively.